



Aus der
Büchersammlung des Capitäns
Th. Dempster Gordon.

Geschenk des k. Forstrathes G. Dürig
an die k. Bibliothek.

L. fr.
15^o - 6

2

M A R I A ;

OR,

THE HOLLANDERS:

BY LOUIS BUONAPARTE.

VOL. II.

THE HOLLANDERS

IN A R I A

THE HOLLANDERS

IN THE HOLLANDERS

IN THE HOLLANDERS

THE HOLLANDERS

M A R I A ;

OR,

THE HOLLANDERS :

BY

LOUIS BUONAPARTE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :

Printed by J. Gillet, Crown-court, Fleet-street,

FOR H. COLBURN, CONDUIT-STREET ;

AND LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1815.

M A R 1 4

THE HOLLANDERS



IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed by J. G. Fisher, 11, St. Paul's Church-yard.

For H. Colburn, 5, Strand.

And for J. W. Smith, 11, St. Paul's Church-yard.

Printed by J. G. Fisher, 11, St. Paul's Church-yard.

1814.

M A R I A ;

America Gordon

THE HOLLANDERS.

Balmaghie House
LETTER XXIV.

Julius to his Sister.

SISTER, you remember Chambéri, St. Jean de Maurienne, and Sophia. You remember also, that to rescue her from insolence, I was obliged to resort to the extremity of giving a young man a blow of my sabre, which wounded him slightly.

This was not the end of the affair, but I was obliged to leave the place; Adolphus was absent; it was necessary to wait for another opportunity, and that

did not occur for some time. The officer in question, and myself, did not meet in the course of our duty, until very lately.

A month ago, to day, Adolphus and I left St. Jean de Maurienne for Bourgoing, where we were charged with a commission. Arrived at Chambéri, where we changed horses, the recollection of Sophia came into our minds. We alighted, and taking the post-master aside, we questioned him. He informed us, that with the exception of the daughter, all the rest of the family were safe. They went different ways during the siege, had the good fortune to escape, and returned to the town some time after, bringing back their father, who had been cured of his wounds in the French hospitals, but bewailing the loss of Sophia, whom they thought dead. What was very singular, they did not yet know that we had saved their daughter. As you may well imagine, we are at a loss to comprehend the rea-

son. We related to the post-master what we had done for Sophia, and with all which we was hitherto wholly unacquainted. But now, by dint of questions, we discovered, that the old grand-mama, to whom I had conducted her, was at variance with her daughter and her son-in-law; that she had not seen them for a great number of years; and that she had an affection for none of the family but Sophia. At a former period, she had demanded to have this amiable girl for a constant resident with her, offering, on that condition, to make her the sole heiress of her fortune. The demand had been refused.

We thought it probable, that the grandmother had concealed Sophia's safety from her family. At one step, we reached that house of melancholy recollections, and had the happiness to restore it to joy, after all we had cost it! Imagine, my dear sister, that our conjecture was judged so reasonable, that

all the house believed it certain, and indulged in the liveliest gaiety. Not willing to leave my work imperfect, I set out with her brother in a chaise. It was resolved that Adolphus should wait for me at Chambéri.

We arrived, and found the old grand-mama. Sophia was at first denied to us ; but her brother obtained her presence at last. She was dazzlingly beautiful. If Adolphus had been in my place, I know not but Adelaide would have been entirely forgotten ; but, as to Maria, it is impossible ! What beauty can flatter herself with equalling her !

On our return to Chambéri, you will suppose that neither Adolphus nor I had any other lodging than the house of Sophia's father. At dinner, there was a new guest, a young officer, who served to amuse, and sometimes importune, the mistress of the table, at whose side he was seated. He spoke loud, and hav-

ing turned his eyes, at this instant, on Sophia, whom I saw affected, and ready to weep, she whispered in my ear, "Do you not remember him?" In reality, it was the young officer whom I had wounded on her account. He bowed to me: "You are very good to recognize me.—Do you remain here?" said I.—"I shall have the honour of waiting upon you;" and he reddened with anger. Adolphus knew him, on hearing him called Ernest; he looked furiously at him, and stole away with him without my perceiving it.

"Sir," said he, "either I am much mistaken, or you are he whom my friend offended in defence of Sophia?"—"Yes, and I shall demand satisfaction of him in an hour."—"But will you not accept of me, instead of my friend?"—"Willingly;" returned he, and went to the governor of the town, an intimate friend of his, who lent him good pistols, and followed him as his second.—"Sir," said

the governor to Adolphus, "you have to do with a terrible man ; he has *expedited* more than twenty ; you are unfortunate."

Adolphus was beside himself. He had seen a portrait under Ernest's waistcoat, of which some buttons had been open during dinner. He believed he had seen the portrait of Corinna, and he thought of punishing an ancient rival at the same time that he took vengeance for me.

After dinner I asked for Adolphus, and learned that he had gone out with Ernest. I found where they had gone, and hastened to join them. Without the ramparts, I saw the latter at ease with his second, while my friend lay upon the ground, drowned in his blood, and no one condescended to assist him. The same instant saw me draw my sword, attack the murderer, and run him through at a furious thrust. I ran next to the other bleeding man, and bound up his wound. The governor tried in vain to stop the blood of his friend, which ran

in torrents. I have always hated duels ; but how could it be avoided here ? It is well said, that one should swear against nothing. It was a frightful misfortune. Ernest offered me his hand, in which was the portrait that Adolphus had thought he knew. It was Corinna's. He pronounced, with cruel efforts, some unintelligible words. We conducted him home, and learned that his life would be saved, though with much difficulty. Alas ! I should ill express my agony during his illness. It was only in ascertaining that he would recover, that I was restored to life. Adolphus's wound was serious. He was long in danger, and still suffers, and will, for some time, continue to wear his arm in a sling. After a fortnight, he came abroad, and we went together to spend our evenings beside the bed of the other sufferer, grateful, and filled with the most profound repentance.

But I owe you an account of my journey with Sophia, from Saint-Jean de Maurienne to Chambéri. Be satisfied, Hermacantha; if your brother loves Maria, he is as insensible as yourself to all the rest. I have gone through a terrible trial, and I pray earnestly that it may be for the first and the last time! Listen and judge.

When Sophia saw me, she immediately knew me again: her joy was extreme, and an involuntary movement threw her into my arms, and drew from her a flood of tears. Her brother and I had much difficulty in withdrawing her from her grand-mama. We were obliged to have recourse to stratagem; and, while he occupied her apart, I set out with Sophia. Her brother insisted upon this, and assured me that his family's confidence in me was entire.

We travelled in a post-chaise, uncovered, and very small, in which we were

much jolted.* I was obliged to hold Sophia in her place on its narrow seat. It was late in the day, and the weather was very hot. My large hat and feathers served to protect the delicate features of Sophia, who appeared to endure much from the sloping rays of the sun, and often rested her head on my shoulder.

We travelled at a quick pace. At the last delay but one, when it had become dark, I had taken the precaution to order the linch-pins to be fastened; but I had been ill obeyed, and an hour after, the wheels suddenly left us, and, after falling with a terrible shock, we were dragged along the ground. The horses were at length stopped, and the driver went in search of his wheels. One was found; but the other had probably rolled into the river, or down the precipice. What

* The reader will perceive, that this comfortable Savoyard post-chaise was not entirely after the English fashion.—*Tr.*

was to be done? To send the postillion for another chaise, and wait for his return, appeared the only part to take. We were half way between the two post-houses; no village near; a dreary and barren plain around us. Night arrived, and we were left alone. "For God's sake," said Sophia, "do not leave me; let us walk, and let me rest upon your arm. I shall be able to reach the post-house." We continued our road on foot.

Sophia is a perfect beauty, tall, elegantly formed, and fair; and her hair, which was fastened with a very simple comb, is extraordinarily fine.

Educated in habits of unusual reserve, never before had I been so near a woman; and now I felt the delicious weight of the charming Sophia on my arm and on my shoulder!

We travelled thus the greater part of the night. Sophia became exhausted with fatigue. We had rested ourselves only at three stoppages. At length, we

saw a house, and I went to it, to ask hospitality ; but it was uninhabited and shut up, and we continued our way with difficulty. We were now three miles from a village, which we faintly discovered on the edge of the horizon, and the road to which led over a lofty mountain. At this time, Sophia's fatigue was so great, that we were forced to stop. Not far from this spot, and close to a little rivulet, was a sort of hut, or large sentry-house, which served for a shelter to the herdsmen when keeping their cattle. I carried Sophia into it, made her a bed of heath, and lit a fire by aid of dry moss, furze, and flints, which lay on the ground. I had scarcely laid the heath for Sophia's bed, before she fell on it from my arms, in a swoon. After some time, my efforts restored her suspended senses. " Alas !" said Sophia, " alone with you. To-morrow, you will save me a third time ; will you not ? I am once more under your care ; I pray

you protect me.”—“ I watch over you,” said I ; “ depend upon my zeal.”

The sky grew cloudy : our fire declined, and Sophia, worn out with fatigue, soon yielded to sleep. The storm began to growl. I had hitherto remained without-side the hut, but the lightnings succeeded each other rapidly, and the noise of the thunder, and the dismal cries of nocturnal animals, frightened Sophia. I returned to her. The strangeness of her situation, fear, fatigue, and extreme agitation, threw her into a sort of delirium :—“ O mother ! mother !” said she, “ do not leave me !” Then she lay strong hold on my arm, and I was forced to sit by her side. She leaned her head on my shoulder, which served for a pillow, while my hand, placed, in spite of myself, upon her heart, felt all its palpitations.

Exhausted at length myself, I, too, no longer kept awake. Not thoroughly asleep, I retained a vague idea of the

place in which I was, at the same time that I thought of Maria, and even of Sophia; for I confess it. But the name of Maria governed all my feelings; and is it not triumph enough for a name to calm the storm of the senses by its single magic!

I awoke at the first dawn of day, but I did not dare to release myself from my enchanting burden. At last, Sophia herself awoke; and her eye-lids had been open some instants, when I perceived her considering with a bewildered air my attitude, my emotion, the wretched cabin, and the sun which was then rising pure and serene.

Suddenly, comprehending her situation, she sprung from me with terror, as if struck by the electric spark. "Where am I? Who are you?" said she; then, she fell on her knees, and I heard her pray aloud, in her language, with fervour and emotion.

"You have delivered me from all my perils, and from myself," said she. "I

have rested in your arms as in those of a father : I owe you too much to become a stranger to you. Three times you have saved me ; let us unite our destinies ; let it be a brother now, but a husband soon, who leads me to my parents !”

“ Angelic Sophia !” replied I, “ my heart is worthy of yours ; but behold here the portrait of my sister, and this other—is that of Maria !” — “ Maria ! you are engaged then !” said Sophia mournfully, and striving that I should not see her tears. “ Ah ! what a fool I am !—let us go ! let us go !”

A herdsman had undertaken to fetch a chaise and horses from the post-house, when, to our astonishment, we saw our own arrive. We had followed the wrong road, the old one instead of a better. We were soon at Chambéri, where I had the happiness to restore Sophia to the arms of her parents, intoxicated with joy, felicity, and gratitude. It seemed as if heaven had bestowed upon me this sweet

consolation, in recompence of my pure designs. O Hermacintha! you know all, and be my judge: let nothing be concealed from Maria, by whom alone can I be justified and absolved!

LETTER XXV.

Hermacantha to Julius.

YOU recollect, my friend, the emotions which we experienced, when, on our return to the Hermitage, after a long absence, our parents over-ran with us all these retreats, the beloved scenes of our childish sports, the undeniable witnesses of the reality of our early recollections? Well! this is what Maria and I feel in your absence; a confused mixture of sweet remembrances and tender regrets; for, as soon as the first appear, the second lay hold on them, and stifle them! These are the sensations which places of this kind, beautiful as they may be, dear as they may have been, incessantly call forth in us, as soon as the heart no longer possesses more than half itself.

The season is delightful, the sky is

pure, and the flowers are in all their lustre. It might be said, that all nature sought to indemnify us for our separation, by spreading forth all her charms :

*Ma come ch'ella le governi, o volga,
Prima vera per me pur non e mai!*

*But, howsoe'er she rule, or change her sway,
No spring-time comes to me! no smiling May!*

PETRARCH.

Wherever you are, my friend, our thoughts, our hearts, our wishes accompany you. At whatever hour you direct your thoughts toward your friends, they cross ours. Several posts have arrived without bringing letters from you. I do not suffer myself to be uneasy, because Maria is too much so. Make haste to calm our fears. I hope that we shall be relieved before you receive this.

I have to tell you the weaknesses of your cousin. They will show you, not the constancy of her sentiments, for that is unnecessary, but the constancy of her

remembrance. For myself, I think that we have real sorrows enough in our separation, not to forge those of fancy.

Yesterday we received news from the Hermitage, and an account of the little fête which our good villagers have given to young Martha, whom you remember. She is to be married very soon to Catz. He has filled an office in Batavia, by which he has made a very good fortune. The brave sailor left us affectionate and faithful, and he has returned the same. He gave us no news of him during his absence, and we thought him dead, when he has suddenly returned to recompence Martha's constancy and virtue. She is one of the rose-bearers, and that is saying enough.

I know not whether this news is the cause, but Maria's spirits have never been so low, so profoundly melancholy. We watch more than usual, and no book pleases her. To indulge her, I permit her to weary me with the insipid reading

of all the newspapers with which she is furnished by Mademoiselle de Melrode.

The other night, twelve o'clock had struck, and we were obliged to part. Maria and Mademoiselle Melrode withdrew by the way of the picture-gallery. A moment after, I heard a piercing shriek, and hastened after them. The candles which Mademoiselle Melrode carried were thrown down, and extinguished; the window in the middle, looking toward the Boulevards, was open; the moon made every thing nearly as light as day; the shade of the beautiful lime-trees and poplars which border the high road, was lengthened along the way. Maria, with her hair dishevelled, and in a swoon, lay on the floor, half visible by the light of the moon. When I had succeeded in bringing her to herself, I remonstrated tenderly with her on this fit of senseless delirium. She threw herself into my arms, and wept bitterly.—“Sister,” said she, “I saw an appa-

rition as I went along. It was a courier, on a white horse of enormous size. The courier stretched out his hand to me, and offered me a black letter, which my terror did not permit me to take."— Casting her eyes again toward the window, a second cry escaped her: "See him again!" she exclaimed! "he is come back! the letter has fallen out of his hand!" and she relapsed into a swoon.

I must acknowledge, Julius, that though I do not believe in the existence of such an empire of the imagination over the illusions of sight, yet I thought I could see that the tufts of trees, whose shadows lay upon the road, presented, at a first view, the appearance with which Maria had been struck. She insisted upon searching for the letter. As you will suppose every effort was vain. This occurrence has disturbed the tranquil sadness and resignation to which we had begun to use ourselves. After some time, she retired with some share of compo-

sure ; but two hours afterward she came and awoke me, running like one mad : “ Sister,” said she, “ I cannot sleep alone. Oh ! something fatal to me has happened ! Four o’clock has struck, and my whole heart has trembled at that feeble sound. I have dreamed that Julius was killed ; and not only I have dreamed it, but, in starting from my sleep, and with my eyes open, my lips have pronounced, in spite of myself, these terrible words : *He is dead !* In spite of myself, I said so, in obedience to an invisible power. Feel, Hermacantha, what a cold sweat is upon me ; it is more than natural !” Her tears flowed, and mine followed them. We could find no other means of diverting our grief, than that of reading all your later letters. Happily, the most recent of them announced that you had gone into cantonments, and that the first act of your bloody tragedies was finished. Though we had known this several days ago, I

know not how it happened that we had forgotten it. Perhaps the end of your letter was the cause. It represents, that in spite of the truce, you could not have leave of absence, and this disappointment was of itself enough to afflict us. I have made new efforts at the War-Office, but uselessly. Though a foreigner, you must submit, they say, to the military laws of this country, and there is no means of procuring your dismissal at the present moment. I abstain from all melancholy reflections on this subject. Alas ! let us wait.

I endeavour, my friend, to enter into all you feel. I am a little angry with Sophia, I confess. Can Maria be compared with any other ? May you always escape as happily from your trials ! But, once more, Julius, be upon your guard ! Avoid all temptations ; all,—absolutely all !

LETTER XXVI.

From Adolphus to Hermacantha.

WHY has it happened that the first letter which I have presumed to address to you must be full of affliction? Prepare yourself for the most unhappy news—and yet Julius is not dead. I am wounded, separated from my friend, and detained at Chambéri. Several balls required to be extracted from my wounds. I am in great pain while I write; but even the fever which has come upon me shall not prevent me from informing you of all which is at once so distressing and so interesting to you.

The truce was broken on the 15th of the month, and by the evening we were ready to attack the enemy. On the 16th we had a hot affair. Separated from Ju-

lius, a report of his being killed reached me ; but my searches were fortunate, and at the close of the day I found him safe and sound, though he had suffered much from fatigue, privation, and trouble. The success of this day was doubtful ; great numbers were lost on both sides. On the second day, Hermacantha, victory seemed to decide entirely against us. We were at the head of some columns, which, struck with I know not what sudden terror, refused to advance ; and, in the mean time, the enemy's fire brought down a great number of ours, including almost all the officers, and even generals, who were assembled in front of the troops, to set the example. I myself was wounded almost in the arms of my friend, who on all occasions has shown a coolness and presence of mind wonderful at his age. He had seen those about him fall, and thought only of giving them succour ; but when, after my wound, he saw me covered with blood,

and heard my groans, rage took possession of him ; and, putting himself at the head of the most advanced of the men, he made a short harangue, and marched upon the enemy. Enthusiasm was re-kindled, and we gained the victory.

While Julius marched in advance, I was carried into the rear. In the evening, I inquired for him, but nobody could give me any news. I heard his praises from many mouths, but I was assured that he was either wounded or a prisoner, and that they were still searching for him on the field of battle. I could not resist my impatience ; and calling to my mind the hallowed indignation of friendship, which surrounded as with a glory the figure of Julius, when he saw me wounded, I felt spring within myself the same emotion. Feeble, but still able to drag myself along, I left the hospital, passing through the dying and the dead, and crawled to the field of battle. There I passed several hours in searching for

my friend. What a moment, Hermintha! A thousand voices addressed me in the most heart-rending manner, imploring assistance. One expired in asking for it; another in repulsing, through the convulsions of death, the proffered hand! Our own wounded could not be distinguished from those of the enemy. I thought myself on those infernal plains where the guilty groan for ever, and have no resource, because they are watched over by no Providence! Notwithstanding my levity, I know not what secret voice arose within me against war. What! we live but for an instant!—sickness, sorrow of heart, necessities, and sleep, abridge or harass our road, and we still pant to destroy each other! Great God! is it for the interests of the great affairs of this world? Know we not that every thing here below dies and disappears to him that dies himself? Know we whence we came, that we should seek to change what is at present? Know we where we go, that

we should pretend to regulate the future? While I was a prey to these reflections, I did my utmost to succour the wounded. I fetched them water, and bound up their wounds, and exhorted them to take courage, and assured them that as soon as the morning appeared, assistance should be sent to them.

After long and useless researches, I had turned back, at length, sorrowful, and fatigued, and oppressed with pain, when I thought I heard the voice of Azor, my favourite spaniel, the old friend of the celebrated Fidèle. I am in the habit of leaving him with my horses, when there is to be any fighting. Nevertheless, I heard him, at this instant, uttering long and frightful howls, between which he was silent at intervals, as if to wait for the effect of his appeals. I turned to the side whence the voice proceeded, passing over a great number of dead bodies. I reached Azor, and

found him close to a wounded person, whose head he was endeavouring to lift with his nose, and then pouring forth a deep and plaintive cry at every time he saw his efforts useless. The sky was overcast. The moon travelled, or seemed to travel, through the clouds with rapidity; the wind, the wolves, joined their cries and groans to those which came from the field of battle, or rather of desolation, and to those of Azor. Toward the horizon, the river gave the monotonous sound of its waters, and from the bridge of boats, which had been thrown over it, came, from time to time, the piercing cries of the wounded, upon whom operations were performing. On the opposite side, the fires of the *biwacs* of the two armies were blazing, and seemed to throw their flames afar, to prevent the cries of pain from penetrating beyond the field of battle to the marshes and woods which they covered. Azor came to me, without any expression of

joy; and then, returning to his first post, resumed his dismal howling. It was my friend—it was Julius! Courage, Hermacintha! his wound was not a very dangerous one, but he had lost much blood; he was in a state of extreme weakness, and he must infallibly have perished, if he had remained many hours without succour. I dressed his wound sufficiently to stop the efflux of blood, gave him a little brandy, and aiding him with all my strength, he was able to rise, and walk, availing himself of resting on my arm, a strong cane, and Azor, who, desisting, now, from his lamentable cries, took of himself the road to the bridge, before us, picking out the smoothest path.

We were making progress, when frightful cries, and a smart firing commenced at a small distance from us. One of our parties was surprized and repulsed; and, in an instant, surrounded and separated. I was strong

enough to fight for a few instants, and defend my friend ; but thrown down, and wounded anew, I fainted. I recovered my senses long afterward, in the hospital, at the time when the commander-in-chief, come to visit the wounded, was there. He received a courier from Paris. Letters in great numbers were distributed to the officers who surrounded the general, and to the wounded. There were none for me. In opening the last packet, the general, holding a letter, and directing his arm toward the place where I was, said, " This is for you, Julius. The address is beautifully written. It is, doubtlessly, from your amiable betrothed. It will do your wounds no harm." " But, good God ! where is he then," said I aloud ; " he is not here." The general was now told, that too feeble to defend himself, he had fallen after I fell, and that he had not been found, in spite of every search

Madam, you know all. As soon as my wounds will permit me, I shall fly to find him ; I will give you instant news.

P. S. I open my letter.—He is not dead, but a prisoner. Inclosed is the note which I have just received, on the return of one of our flags of truce.

LETTER XXVII.

From Julius to Adolphus.

I AM a prisoner. I know not whither I am to be conducted. Far from thee, from her, and from Hermacantha, I shall not sustain myself against my afflictions long ! Procure my exchange. O Maria ! Maria ! whatever crosses, whatever afflictions, I have to undergo, remember always, that I shall never change !

LETTER XXVIII.

From Hermacantha to Adelaide.

WE should be no more, we should have sunk under our griefs, if we did not flatter ourselves with a hope to which my judgment refuses to listen. All the efforts of Adolphus have been in vain. I am assured that he is only a prisoner—that he still lives ; but we have been unable to discover either the route which he has been obliged to take, or the manner in which he travels. Adolphus continues his inquiries, and bids us hope ; but I see, my Adelaide, the future growing dark before us. What will become of him, alone, wounded, suffering, sorrowful, and naturally given to melancholy ? I am leaving home, for I must find him. Fever and nervous disorders,

which were strangers to me till now, afflict me much ; but are they, or can they be, equal to the distresses of my soul ? I will have Maria go too, and I have prepared every thing. I wait for our passports with an impatience difficult to express. O Adelaide ! pray that I may have strength to support my situation, and execute my project. Maria is sick ; I am not well ; I am obliged to console her, and to endeavour to lend her spirits.

It was the Duke d' Ast who brought me the letter. He informs me, that you are going to Paris, and that Adolphus's family are urgent for your union. I conceive that their just fears that they may lose his parents, make them hasten the moment of your happiness. Be happy, my dear Adelaide ; you deserve it under every view. Fear not that our unhappy situation will make us strangers to your's. Nothing can console me ; but the certainty that some

one is happy. some good and estimable individual like you, will alleviate my trouble. I have related to you the observation of Maria, when, after the mournful departure of Julius, she learned that Maria was made happy by the return of Catz. "At least," said he, "fate is just somewhere!" I shall repeat it with pleasure; and, without diminishing my sorrows, the assurance will not be unsoothing.

Have you not remarked the astonishing coincidence between the presentiments of Maria and the fate of Julius? It was at four o'clock in the morning, on the same day when Maria had a presentiment of his death, that his friend found him on the field of battle, among the dead and dying. What, then, is the astonishing mystery of these coincidences? Is it a sixth sense? Is it really a sixth sense for lovers? I cannot comprehend it. But what presumption in me! Do we comprehend any thing which we

touch ? We live in the midst of continual miracles. The faculty which we possess of being struck with them, and even of not comprehending them, is one. Meanwhile, our curiosity and vanity make us seek that which should be eternally concealed from us. Adelaide, be happy !

I open my letter. Adolphus tells me to hope, and wait the return of a courier, whom he also has sent forward, before I begin my journey, and I shall follow this advice. May I be soon relieved from this cruel and insupportable uncertainty ! Remember that he was dying a few hours before, and that he would have died but for his friend. Where is he at present ? alone, entirely alone. Oh God !

LETTER XXIX.

*From Hermacantha to the Prelate of
Arnhem.*

HE is still living, O my father ! or, at least, so we are assured. But what horrible incertitude ! Your voice, and that of duty and hope sustain me. You desire me to inform you of all that concerns us. I will do so ; but how much have I to fear, that your friendship for us will cost you many melancholy moments.

Maria is still in the crisis of a severe illness ; I am glad of it. Her excellent constitution will resist the attacks she experiences, and during their continuance, she will forget her misfortune. When she shall be entirely restored to herself, I shall be in condition to resume my functions of nurse. What obliga-

tions are we not under to Mademoiselle de Melrode ! This good friend of ours weeps for our misfortunes as if they were her own, and her tears call forth Maria's, and assuage them. The latter is sensible only to one consolation, and that is, the being with me. We talk of the countries in one of which Julius may be. The hours drag, our troubles follow them, and nevertheless, the days move on.

O my father, what are the joys of this world ? We no longer regret our country, we have no desire to re-visit our beautiful gardens ; it seems to us as if they had lost all their charms in our eyes. The works which we read again and again, Racine, Telemachus, and Homer, delight us no more. Dare I acknowledge it ! our solicitude for the unhappy is diminished. I could believe, that the more our fate refuses us the happiness to which Providence formerly called us, the more our sentiments for

my beloved brother increase in warmth ; and, meanwhile, they harden themselves against fortune, and repulse every other affection, to concentrate themselves wholly in that which can never change. Sometimes, I am tempted to abandon myself to human weakness, to give my cousin an example of discouragement, and find the end of our sufferings in despair. Your severe but persuasive voice arrests the evil impulses of my heart, and even Maria herself returns to life at the sound of the rapturous words, “ he is still alive ? ” But where is he ? Where is he ? Where does he hide himself ?

Adolphus is arrived at Paris, much wounded, but out of all danger. His parents are eager to marry him to Adelaide. One might say, that they dread lest death should threaten him again before that event. Adelaide and her family are at Paris, and the marriage will take place immediately.

LETTER XXX.

From the same to the same.

ALL that Adolphus has done has been fruitless, and we remain in the greatest inquietude. The members of the diplomatic body have undertaken to prosecute the search. Think of us, O my father ! encourage me, for I have need ! If you knew what I have suffered in assisting at Adelaide's marriage ! Maria was not there ; and it was out of consideration for us, that it was celebrated almost in secret.

Corinna, the famous Corinna, whom you counsel me to avoid, has shown herself affected by our sorrows. She has offered me her services, which I have accepted, because, more fortunate than we, she has obtained permission to travel. She sets out with Ernest and a

Polish nobleman, her fellow countryman. She has promised to neglect nothing for the discovery of my brother.

I ought to accuse myself of an evil thought, my father! I fear that virtue and happiness are separate things. Can it be possible that Corinna is happy? She glitters, and commands the fashion and the youth of Paris; neither respect, fortune, beauty, pleasures, health, nor any thing else, is wanting to her. She is generally beloved in society, though she is as inconsistent in her discourse as in her conduct. Sometimes she holds the language of propriety, and sometimes that of the most ungoverned irregularity. She speaks to every one according to his fancy. She is said to be kind and obliging; but what is kindness in a woman? she that should be without it, would be a monster. I have remarked that this is the usual eulogy passed upon women of whom nothing praise-worthy can be said. Nothing, in

my apprehension, more resembles folly, than good nature without virtue. She is reported to have a good understanding ; but I would have that judged of, particularly in woman, by the conduct. What is the amount of all borrowed babble, which proves nothing, and fixes on nothing solid ?

Adelaide is already married, and her happiness is not to be doubted of. I admire how fortune has favoured those two young people ! Who had told the parents of Adolphus, that the wife who suited him, who was made for him, was to be found in an obscure corner of North Holland ? Their reciprocal happiness may be predicted with confidence. Adolphus and Adelaide are said to discover, every instant, new points of agreement in character, sentiments, and manner of thinking ; and these agreements are not those which time, familiarity, and experience, destroy, but which, on the contrary, they cement and multiply.

LETTER XXXI.

From the same to the same.

WE have often news from all parts of Europe ; but Julius continues mute ! Where is he ? I am assured that he is safe, and I myself encourage Maria ; and yet I know not what frightful doubt

M'opprime, O Dio ! e mi trafige il cuor !

Whelms me, O God ! and pierces through my heart !

My facility in finding employments, has saved me from the despair which is growing in my breast. What cruel uncertainty ! I begin to fear ; but no, I hope yet, since every one invites me to do so, and I ought, for Maria's sake. She appears less agitated ; meanwhile, I watch over a calm which affrights me.

She exhibits, at times, an entire tranquillity, but it is an absolute indifference, as if no spring which afflicts her, would do so long. Yesterday I surprised her at the bottom of the garden which belongs to our house, contemplating the little tricks of a multitude of birds. She had left off reading her book, which was still open, and was the romance of *Paul et Virginie*. She had stopped at the place where Virginia perishes in the storm!

I design to prolong our stay at this place, if political occurrences do not prevent it; but affairs seem to grow more and more perplexed. The war is becoming general, and every body is in apprehension of great troubles.

Our society is composed of Adelaide, Adolphus, their parents, the Count and Countess d'Eu, and their brother-in-law the Duke of Ast. This last is a very distinguished man, under every view but that of morals. Maria has made a

great impression on him ; but I am perfectly at ease. Julius himself would not succeed in changing the heart of my pupil.

LETTER XXXII.

From the same to the same.

INTO what labyrinth are we cast ? What pestilent fever is diffused through the atmosphere, and has turned all heads ! One might say, that every one is mad. We see nothing here but muskets and cannon, and hear nothing but drums and the noise of assassinations. It might be said, that the French, and especially the Parisians, were weary of life. Alas ! they were too happy ! Every day, the people immolate a fresh victim to their rage. The war between the court and them becomes furious, and, in abiding the issue, many worthy persons perish.

We have had some uneasiness on the subject of our cousin the Count D'Eu.

He was walking with his wife on the Boulevards des Invalides, when a crowd gathered round him, loading him with abuse. He was ignorant of the cause of the tumult, and knew no means of putting an end to it, and satisfying the frantic populace, who threatened to kill him, every time he came near a lamp. The Duke D'Ast happening to pass by, heard a confusion of loud cries, "Down with the aristocrats! down with the black cockade!" and immediately guessed the occasion; upon which, approaching his friends, with the air of joining in the threats, he said, in a low voice, "Your wife has a bow of black ribbons in her bonnet; tread it under your feet, or you are lost!" The Count did not lose a moment, but threw it down, and trod upon it, with a sort of affected fervour, and the mob, quite enchanted with him, led him home in triumph.

We are about to return to our Hermitage. Thence, perhaps, I shall more

easily get into Germany. I am in haste, father, to repass the Moerdyck, and reach our humid but happy soil.

Adolphus has just left us, to go again in search of Julius. Adelaide and he separated from each other with difficulty. What obligations such a sacrifice lays us under to them both !

LETTER XXXIII.

From the same to the same.

WEARIED with the frightful spectacle of a people in the midst of revolution, that is, in the wildest effervescence, shocked by continual massacres, and by the most unheard-of atrocities, I had resolved on returning to the Hermitage. Adelaide would have accompanied us the first stage, her state of pregnancy preventing her from making the journey to Holland, which she would otherwise have certainly undertaken, in the absence of Adolphus.

Already, to the great satisfaction of Maria, we had got sight of the high road to Brussels, withoutside the barrier at which we had stopped to exhibit our passports, when some men of suspicious

appearance, and armed in a grotesque and ridiculous manner, surrounded our carriage, and signified to us that we must be taken by them to I know not what magistrates. In vain were they told that we were foreigners. They pretended that we were emigrating, and no means could be found to undeceive them. They led us, therefore, at a slow pace, and in triumph, into the heart of Paris, as if they were bringing in the chiefs of their enemies. Maria was half dead with terror, and my servants furious ; especially the brave Tolmer. We arrived before the judges. We were questioned, as if we had been accused of some crime. They were upon the point of sending us to prison, but the Duke d'Ast extricated us from our danger, with an admirable warmth and devotion. He pleaded our cause with an energy and eloquence which affected ourselves. He convinced the judges, and persuaded the people, and carried

us to his house, which we have not yet dared to leave.

Do not expect from me any details of the present troubles. They are bloody saturnalia, and a heart like your's will become acquainted with them but too soon.

LETTER XXXIV.

*From Mademoiselle de Melrode to Her-
macintha.*

I AM about to inform you, Madam, of the most melancholy and most unexpected events.

After your last letter, I was enjoying the happiness of learning that you were less unquiet as to your brother's situation, when a considerable number of the allied troops appeared suddenly upon your estates, and, giving themselves up, at the same moment, to every species of excess, devastated the neighbouring farm of Amerongen, cut down the wood which embellished it, dispersed the women and girls of the neighbourhood, and destroyed the greater part of the cattle. We were informed of these horrors by

the arrival of the inhabitants of Amerongen, flying before their ravagers, and plunged into the greatest distress and misery. I consulted, according to your orders, our good prelate. He endeavoured to console the villagers of Amerongen, distributed among them the provisions of the château, and his own, and carried them to Arnhem, where the magistrates are directed to look to their entertainment, and the redress of their wrongs. We had hoped that the Hermitage would not experience a visit from these dreadful guests; and we were encouraged to do so, by the opposite direction which they took, on quitting Amerongen. Nevertheless, they have come unexpectedly upon us, and begun their exactions. They instantly fixed themselves in the château and its environs; the gardens were destroyed in a few hours, and covered with the bodies of your peaceable domestic animals, who, familiar and confiding, came of them-

selves to receive the blows of their assassins, and licked the hands which were covered with their blood.

The prelate ordered the men to arm, and to assemble the women and children at Martha's Deugd. Order was at first maintained in the village; but, toward evening, the soldiers, half intoxicated, attempted to make their way into your colony, where all the women and girls, and your orphans, were together. Already several grenadiers had succeeded in carrying off a young rose-bearer, Martha; already they had carried her into the fields, when Catz, who is to be her husband, being informed of her situation, flew to her succour, filling all the environs, as he went, with cries of despair. All the men assembled, surrounded Martha's Deugd, drove away the robbers, and rescued Martha, but not without the shedding of blood. Two soldiers were killed, and several wounded. On our side, Catz alone received several

wounds, of which, though some are serious, none is mortal.

The officers could not restrain the troops. In the night, they spread themselves every where, and pillaged almost all the houses. The château, against which they turned their fury, became a prey to flames ; but they attacked Martha's Deugd in vain. Our villagers, with the aid of the wide and deep canals which surround it, repulsed all their efforts, and tranquilly beheld from their post the sack of their dwellings. " Provided they do not touch the pupils of Hermacantha," said they, " we will bear all."

Meantime, the prelate obliged the rest of us females to depart in the night. We passed the Lec, under the walls of Martha's Deugd, and a dozen carriages, collected in the Betuve, brought us to Thiel. What a journey, O Hermacantha ! The women and children crying, and the firing of guns succeeding

each other, amid the flames of the château, and of all our homes.

We were received with open arms by the inhabitants of Thiel. Not content with succouring us, they were arming themselves, and preparing to fly to the assistance of our villagers, when a commissary brought me, along with a letter from our prelate, the news that this sort of war was terminated, and that the leaders of the mutineers had been arrested by order of the general, and put to death on the spot. Some more of our people had been wounded, and, among the first, the prelate, in endeavouring to make peace. His wounds were not mortal. I was directed to wait for further intelligence, and not to return.

The next morning, the burgomasters of Thiel paid me a visit. They came to inform me, that your unfortunate village had lost every thing ; all the produce of the harvest, the magazines, the cattle, and the greater part of the houses ;

and even Martha's Deugd was almost entirely destroyed. I thought myself fulfilling your wishes, in letting your peasants want for nothing ; and the bailiffs of the seigniory have exerted themselves to second my intentions.

I was very undecided what plan to adopt, when I received an invitation from the prelate to come to Arnhem, with my pupils, since no other asylum was left us, and to leave to him the conduct and the care of the village. I have obeyed, and have had the happiness to conduct your orphans hither in safety ; thanks to our good prelate, who came a great distance to meet us, and procure us a convenient place of abode.

I shall say nothing of the troubles and disquietudes which I experienced on my journey. I was several nights without being in bed, and I have been obliged to go through the two armies with the children. I was several times obliged to apply to the military com-

manders and the magistrates for their protection. What astonishes me is, that many officers, well born and educated, were the most eager to molest them ; and, when I think on their past dangers, here, in the most civilized countries of Europe, I cannot resist a sort of terror. Nevertheless, we are told that our civilization is almost perfect ! What social perfection, great God ! when these unhappy infants could not pass in safety from one town to another !

LETTER XXXV.

From the Prelate of Arnhem to Mademoiselle de Melrode.

Go to Paris, Melrode, as quickly as you can, and inform Hermacantha of the most afflicting occurrence possible. Julius is dead of the consequences of his wounds, and of a pestilential fever, in Austrian Poland! Ernest, who is in that country, has sent me his cuirass and time-keeper, which he has been able to obtain. The cuirass is pierced on the right side with several balls. I inclose the details.*

Do all that your friendship will suggest, to soften to his sister the effect of this terrible misfortune. Make her know it in such a manner as that it may not come

* They have not been found.

suddenly upon her. So many persons have been employed to obtain news of Julius, that it is not astonishing that Ernest, as he tells me, has written more than twenty letters containing particulars of this event.

I am in profound affliction!—Admire, Mademoiselle, how Providence disposes every thing according to her will! She leaves to vegetate an old man of more than seventy years, and a young man, in the flower of his spring, perishes at his first appearance in the world!—Let her will be done, Mademoiselle! Profoundly abasing ourselves before her divine decrees, let us adore, and learn resignation!

LETTER XXXVI.

*From Mademoiselle de Melrode to the
Prelate of Arnhem.*

O GREAT GOD! what have I learned? how shall I announce to her this affliction? I want a letter from you, very earnest, unanswerable, to prevent her from sinking under misfortune, to force her to fulfil her duties to the end. Forbid her to die; she will obey you; you are her oracle. I wait your answer, to begin a task the very thought of which breaks my heart!

LETTER XXXVII.

From the same to the same.

THE great blow is given ! May it have no fatal consequences !

I found the ladies residing at Count d'Eu's, near Paris. It is in this retired and romantic spot that all their relations are assembled together, for shelter from the political storm, of which the present violence is inconceivable.

All this brilliant society, where French taste, wit, and the graces, shine in their full lustre ; not even Hermacantha herself, in spite of every effort, have been able, for a single instant, to divert Maria from her well-founded sorrows.

Conformably with your instructions, I assigned, as the occasion of my unexpected arrival, our uneasiness in regard

to our friends. Hermacantha seemed to believe me, and suspect nothing further. Maria remained several days in the semblance of an equal conviction; but, as she never left my side, notwithstanding all the efforts of her noble and amiable family, she finished by discovering my dismal secret.

One day, she remarked to me that I never spoke to her of Julius.—I could not restrain my sobs and tears. “Ah! Melrode, Melrode, you bring us good news of Julius, do you not?”—And as, at these words, my anguish redoubled, her’s burst forth violently—“*He is dead, Melrode; oh yes! he is dead!—alone! so badly wounded, away from all of us; I have never doubted it—he is dead!—I should have been too happy—I am prepared for it by his long silence.*”

I looked attentively at her while she spoke, and descried the situation of her soul. I was frightened at the alteration of her features, her hurried look, the ex-

treme impatience she expressed, and, above all, the deep and painful sighs which came from her bosom. I replied in a manner to calm her, but not to remove her uneasiness.

On the evening of the same day, Hermacantha fell ill. She was in a fever, accompanied by delirium, and required many attentions, which Maria rendered to her with all that filial tenderness she feels for her.

When she had become convalescent, I told my pupil, that it was for her to comfort the sister of Julius on the uncertainty of his situation ; and that it appeared to be her disquietude on that account which had doubled the strength and dangers of her disorder. Maria acquitted herself of this mission with a calmness and resignation which astonished me. She found courage to speak of the possibility of his death, and prepared Hermacantha for the news much better than I could have believed. I now

thought that the moment for delivering your letter was arrived; but what was my dismay to see how the certitude struck both of them to the earth!—Maria, who a moment before consoled her cousin for this misfortune, and appeared to entertain no doubts of it, asked me now, in a broken voice, “Ah! Melrode, is there no hope?”—Very soon, I was obliged to be the nurse of both. Maria caused me serious apprehensions for several days. When she was a little recovered, I talked to her of Hermacantha and our pupils, so as to make her feel how necessary she was to them all.—“You must live for your sister, for your mother,” said I; “this is the moment for returning her all her cares and affection. She suffers, she has need of you; but you are out of condition to assist her.” She reflected, sighed deeply, and then, as if she had thrown off an enormous weight, made an effort, sat up in her

bed, and threw herself into my arms :—
“ I am sick no more,” said she ; “ have
no fears for me ; Hermacantha wants her
child, and is not that enough ? Let us
go quickly to her.” Kept in bed by her
weakness, I besought her to calm her-
self ; I showed her your letter. Maria
read it several times with a religious re-
verence :—“ What !” said she, at last,
“ we should be culpable if we did not
submit to our misfortunes ?—Let us take
courage ; I could not be his ; I should
have been too happy !”

I told her next of the misfortunes of
the Hermitage, the château destroyed,
the greater part of the farms, all our beau-
tiful gardens, the greater part of the
trees, with the exception of some of the
old ones, saved, as by a miracle, from
the ravages of the ministers of war. She
was insensible to all. “ He is dead,”
said she ; “ all is equal to me ; all is
finished for us.” Nevertheless, this de-

jection ceased when she reached Her-
macintha's bed ; and their mutual ten-
derness and consolations were beneficial
to both.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

IN the midst of our agonies, you will believe with difficulty, that the Duke d'Ast, strongly taken with Maria, has come to me, soliciting my support with her and Hermacintha. "I do not ask you," said he, "to see Maria; I am afraid of being too ill-received in making the confession of my sentiments. When the mind is so deeply plunged in grief, when it is so justly afflicted as Maria's now is, it does not see without repugnance those who might profit by the occasion, or in whom it can suppose the disposition." In spite of his concluding words, his conduct seemed to contradict his doctrine, and he had nothing to flatter himself with in my reply.

Maria's tenderness for her cousin surmounts every other sentiment. By her side, her fears for her have deadened the blows of her grief at the fatal news. There still remains to her Hermacantha, and all that concerns her, to desire in this world. What is personal to herself affects her not at all.

I have learned that the Duke d'Ast is a man of much merit, but too much given up to the world. He loves Maria, and there is nothing which he would not sacrifice to her service ; but it is not a real love which he feels for her ; he admires only her surpassing beauty. He desires only to have possession of her ; in a word, he seems to me, not only not to appreciate, but even entirely misunderstand, the value of all her virtues, and of all her qualities together. Ah ! whatever may be the exterior perfection of that angel, whatever may be the graces and innate charms, you know, my father, that these are nothing, when compared

with her interior soul. It seems as if Maria were a heavenly creature, fallen upon earth by chance. I am, therefore, much displeased with the Duke, because I think that every one ought to see, at the first glance of Maria, the treasures which the casket of her beauty incloses.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the Prelate of Arnhem to Hermacantha.

It is me whom Heaven has chosen to annouuce to you the most terrible of news. Your brother is dead. I have sent the particulars, and the letters which have reached me, to Mademoiselle de Melrode. But it is no news to us; it is only a confirmation of what his words, his state of prisoner, and his silence, have annouced to us long past.

I foresee your griefs, and I partake in them; I love to believe that every protestation on this head is needless. You have learned the misfortunes of your vassals—all your misfortunes overwhelm you at once. I do but undertake with trembling the difficult task of consoling

you. There is no other consolation, in your circumstances than grief, itself, and tears. But, Madam, guard yourself from despair ! learn to suffer ; mortal and fragile creature, learn to endure your lot ! He that dispenses at his choice both good and evil is the Eternal. It is he, that absolute master, but infinite in his justice, his goodness, his profound wisdom ; and this life is but a very little part of that immortal existence which he has bestowed on his creatures : a necessary part, because it is his will that it should be so ; necessary, because through it alone his creatures can deserve the rest. Ah ! Madam, for how many evils ought not this conviction of the existence and perfection of the God of the Universe to console you ! Learn to suffer, since he wills it ; live, since he has destined you duties to fulfil, new sorrows, perhaps, to endure, and other tears to shed !

For what reason, think you, has he given you so many virtues, and so much courage? Could he send afflictions upon any one more capable of supporting them? Live, Madam, live! the extremity of his rigour foretells the end of the tempest. You have Maria to sustain. You do not surely think, that she has no further need of life, because Julius is dead; for you cannot without crime resist the will of Providence; and your fault, your unhappiness, will be still greater, if, far from enlightening your pupil on her true duties, you mislead her youthful reason by a fatal example.

Remember that the will of your parents obliges you to consider as your children those twelve unfortunate shoots of a most virtuous and most pitiable family, to which yours owes its existence, which sacrificed itself for the safety of your father, and of which, in a word, the

happiness and protection constitute your first obligations.*

Not only, by falling on this occasion, you would betray your most imperious duties, but you would contradict the whole tenor of your former life. What ! because you cannot support your grief, these innocent creatures must become the prey of the wicked !

Ah ! if every honest and virtuous person thought like you, misery would strip the earth of all the good, and none but the wicked would remain !

Madam, did you deceive yourself, or did you deceive us, when you assured us, that the Eternal demonstrated his existence to you without ceasing, and in every form ? If you think thus still, fear the great judge, and be resigned.

* This account of the twelve orphans appears to be entirely discordant with the history previously given.—TR.

Because he has been pleased to call your brother to him sooner than you, would you rob yourself of a durable, an everlasting future, to avoid a few moments of suffering?

Desire not, seek not for death; it will come but too soon. *Life is but a flash of lightning*, says Fenelon, whom you love. Eternity is always over our heads, is always ready to engulf us, the great judge to judge us, and ages are but as moments. I have reached the most advanced age, and yet it seems to me that it was yesterday only that I came into the world. I received orders at Arnheim, leaving my family, in the bosom of which I had acquired the necessary instruction. I was then in my youth. Since that time, I have lived on the seigniorship of your parents. All my days have resembled each other; very soon they will be finished, without doubt. What shall I have done? Come into the world, pray to God, and return to him: this is all

my history. When I think of the brevity of my life, notwithstanding its apparent length, I cannot think how the insensate abridge theirs. It seems to me, that yesterday I came into these fields for the first time ! What then are the few moments which remain to you ?

Heaven has destined you to be a consoling angel to your family and to the wretched ; be worthy of your noble mission. Would you lose all the fruit of your past life ?

Where would be the foundation of that fortitude which your character displays, and which your virtues inspire, if you could not support misfortune ?

Your sorrows are great, without doubt, but do you not think there are greater ? Have you seen your parents, torn with remorse, descend guilty into the grave ? No ; they died the death of the just. Have you witnessed the dishonour, vices, and infamy of your children. Have you seen a beloved and estimable

husband betray you at last, and empoison your existence? Has ingratitude wished for the termination of your life? Have you been obliged to cast down your eyes from any other cause than modesty? Have you wanted the means to relieve the unhappy?

Ah! Madam, so far from this, every thing has prospered with you, till the death of your brother. This is your first, and your first real misfortune. But had Providence entered into a bond with you? Had she told you how long he should live? And have you so little foresight as not to know, that one day or other, had he lived to a hundred years, one or other of you must have seen that misfortune which you experience to-day? I do not believe you selfish enough to desire the other alternative. He has died the death of heroes, beloved, esteemed, honoured, lamented; what happier fate could you desire for him? I should have been willing to

have died his death in the fairest moment of my life !

Madam, forgive me this long discourse. I am informed of the condition of your mind by that of my own, by my knowledge of your affection for the best of brothers. I saw you born. I read in your soul that heaven has given you courage to support, to the end, the trials of this life, and thus to fulfill, really, all your duties.

LETTER XL.

*From the Duke d'Ast to Mademoiselle
de Melrode.*

HERMACINTHA and my young cousins, who had gone to Paris in spite of my advice, have been seized, and sent to Nantes, whence they are to be deported. Maria is just informed of it, and the succour of your counsels and authority are more necessary to her than ever.

Laws, ridiculously atrocious, succeed each other with rapidity. All the young nobility are obliged to go into the service, to avoid proscription. The young women and widows are obliged to make choice, within ten days, of a husband among the military, or common people, under pain of being compelled by force,

and given to the first favourites of the pretended governors.

Hermacantha, being already ordered for deportation, does not fall under the class to which these forced marriages apply ; nor do my young cousins, on account of their age. But, as these latter were found at Paris when Hermacantha was seized, they are comprehended in her sentence.

Without consulting either Maria or you, and setting altogether apart the interests of my passion, I requested that she might be included in the deportation ; but I did not succeed. My sister is to be married, to-morrow, to her cousin, the Chevalier d'Eu, whom we have enrolled in order to comply with the terms of the law. I, also, within these few hours, have become a soldier ; and it is under these circumstances that I am now entitled to claim the hand of Maria, for her preservation and sole interest ; for, if it is refused me, she will be

given up to the first boor who demands her.

Maria having heard from her windows the proclamation of this hateful law, I felt myself obliged to open all the wounds of her heart, by offering her my hand ; but she replied with an indignation at which I might have been offended, if I were less acquainted with her self-love, heat of temper, and enthusiasm of women.

They threaten to treat her as an Englishwoman, and proceed against her as such, if she resists much longer.

Understand that the question is not as to preference, nor merely that of fulfilling my wishes ; but, before all, to save Maria from death, or from the horrible fate of bearing some scoundrel's name.

She answers me, that she has nothing to fear ; that death, at the hands of the wicked, would be a blessing ;—this, then, will happen ; for the fury of the

men of the day, and the evil passions are at their height.

I fear, in considering the profound resignation of that angel, that the means may never be found to make another man, after Julius, dear to her heart ; but I demand only to have the name of husband. I bind myself not to require, imperiously, that she should fulfill all her duties ; under the name of husband, I shall be really but her brother, and I shall wait for time and my own good conduct to obtain me the heart of a virtuous wife.

In this hope, I have sounded my general, who has great interest in every thing which relates to military affairs, and I hope to obtain the command of those who are deported to Guiana. Hermintha, whom Maria loves more than herself, will then be under my care. But no time must be lost ; the law allows but ten days for making a choice among the republicans or the defenders of

the country ; I am of this number.—
Give me, Mademoiselle, your assistance.
Let us not lose the most beautiful of the
Graces. All I ask, at present, is, that
she should bear my name.

LETTER XLI.

From Maria to Mademoiselle de Melrode.

I HAVE heard the proclamation of that monstrous law of which the Duke and you speak in your letters. I have received it as a sentence of death.

You say nothing of Hermacintha. Oh! if she were no more, I should be delivered from all my griefs; my fate would be accomplished. Speak to me of her, Melrode; that is the thing essential. What are all these dangers, all these misfortunes, which distract us without ceasing?

When I have lost him whom I need not name, when his sister, my mother, is about, perhaps, to perish also, all possible misfortunes unite and confound themselves under a single phrase; *to die*.

Remember his last words : “ O Maria, Maria, whatever misfortunes, whatever difficulty, may come upon me, remember always, that I shall never change ; ” and tell me, Melrode, whether any consideration, whether any fear, ought to render me at once perjured and ungrateful ? Can I forget all my life ? Can I change ? It seems to me, that if his image were to leave my heart, it would cease to beat. Though the weight of calamity should overwhelm me, though life should oppress me in a manner almost insupportable, could I support a situation more miserable still ? How can I endure the smallest ligature with any. since it is not Julius ? Never, never, If I must be still more unhappy, if I must yet suffer long, very, very long, provided Julius is the cause, and I have nothing wherewith to reproach myself, I shall have strength to bear the burden of existence ! You know, Melrode, what it is which supports us under the most

apalling sufferings, under the tortures and piercing sorrows of the heart ; it is the calm purity of the soul. Deep as the wounds may go, they find innocence and safety at the bottom ; but, if these are wanting, O God ! how can we bear the idea. How much must he suffer, who, in his misfortunes, cannot complain ! he, in whose eyes, every look seems to convey these bitter words—“ You merit your fate ! ” Such would be the destiny of your friend, dear Melrode, if any thing could detach me from him. When I promised him my faith—do you remember that blissful day ? he answered me, that nothing here below should separate us : “ *death alone,* ” added he, with a deep sigh, “ *death alone* can detach us from each other. If that does not separate us, nothing else can do it.”

Melrode, can I forget that solemn moment ! He hears us, perhaps, at this instant ; his shade hovers over us ; we

may betray him ; let us not flatter ourselves that we can escape from him ! Ah ! cease your efforts, dear Melrode, to restore me to love and life. I desire not its end, because, in so doing, I should be guilty toward the author of my days. I am ready to do every thing for my Hermacintha, which belongs only to my existence, and does not require me to betray my love and faith. There is no marriage for Maria, since the death of Julius :

D'allor innanzi, un di non vissi mai :
Seco fu in vita, e secotal fin son giunto,
E mia giornata, ho con suoi pie fornita.*

Recall these words, dear Melrode :—
“ He is not worthy of true happiness who can love twice ! ” Melrode, these are the words of Hermacintha !

* Borne down since then, I have not lived a day :
With him I lived, with him saw life's decay,
And with his feet I close my destined way.

PETRARCH.

LETTER XLII.

*From Mademoiselle de Melrode to
Maria.*

O MADEMOISELLE ! return from your fatal resolution ! I tremble lest it should be no longer time. Remember that it is an extraordinary chance which offers you the protection of the Duke, I do not say for yourself, but for your cousin, your instructress, the adopted children of your family, and for me. Have you a doubt, cruel Maria, that if you fall, we shall all fall by the same blow ?

In the name of all that is dearest to you, accept the hand, the hand only of the Duke ! Every instant may render you the victim of a monstrous law. You can do no other.

I have learned that your name is the

sole word which has escaped your Her-
macintha in her sufferings. She calls
you, and adjures you to join her. But
if you were not thus pursued, nor forced
to give your hand, how could you go to
the colonies alone, without support,
without guide, and without a defender?
Thanks to my age, I hope soon to be
able to join your cousin. Perhaps to-
night, perhaps in an hour, I shall leave
the city in which you are. The Duke
is a soldier, detested by your enemies,
he is liable to receive, from one minute
to another, an order to depart; and,
when he does, you will remain alone,
entirely alone, the butt of the aims of
the wicked! O Madam! Julius him-
self, if he were in the world, would press
you to place what is most precious to
him under shelter from the imminent
dangers which threaten you, under the
eyes of an honest man, one to be relied
on, and to whom you have a thousand
obligations! He told you, that death

alone could separate you. Ah ! has not death separated you, in fact ? Whether he sees, or whether he thinks of you, my heart, whose secret movements have so rarely deceived me, assures me, that both he and Hermacantha desire, that for the first thing, you live. The only means of preserving yourself to your family, to your duties, and to the memory of Julius, is in giving to the Duke all you can give him, your hand, your hand alone ; he submits to ask no more, but to wait every thing from time and yourself then. All that you deprive yourself of is, the possibility of uniting yourself to another ; and of what importance to you is the loss of this faculty, since you can no longer hope to be united to Julius ! You live under the same roof with an unmarried man ; you are in the flower of youth and beauty ; every danger, all your enemies, surround you ; hasten, therefore, to escape them, by devoting yourself to your duties, to

your true mother, to the innocent creatures who are almost your children! Hermacantha, without other motive than your interest and her affection, has sacrificed her youth, all the hope of happiness, all her life! and can you hesitate to follow her example, and to dispute with her the prize of virtue, friendship and courage?

I think I hear, at this place, what you will say, on reading my letter: *I prefer death.* What! you prefer to sacrifice Hermacantha, and your children, to your resolution never to marry, to the fear of receiving the hand only of the Duke! Poor infants, confided to my care, and to the protection of Maria, you, then, must perish! Young and tender flowers, cropped by the hands which should have protected you, after having escaped by miracle the ruin of your country! Adieu, the Hermitage! adieu, *Martha's Deugd!* adieu, good villagers! In vain you lift your hands, morning and

evening, toward heaven, and toward Hermacintha, your second Providence ! Maria, because she cannot support her grief, forsakes you, and condemns you, all at once, to die ! The pupil of Hermacintha condemns her children to become orphans a second time !

LETTER XLIII.

*From Maria to Mademoiselle de
Melrode.*

IN what a fearful struggle you involve me, Melrode? To behold my second mother, to sacrifice my life to her, and my love itself, is the sole desire of my heart. But to bear another name than his! never, Melrode, never! What, am I to sink into the rank of vulgar women, who give their hands twice! Never, Melrode, never—Alas! I shall not survive my Hermacantha; but I am equally sure of not surviving my shame, my cruel destiny, if what you represent is to take place. Let the world blame me or not, my heart, Hermacantha's heart, and Julius's, will applaud me. Never, Melrode, never! Adieu.

LETTER XLIV.

*From Mademoiselle de Melrode to
Maria.*

HERMACINTHA is departing for Nantes, with your young cousins. The latter are already embarked. You have but a moment ; ah ! know the value of it. Your fate is decided. The barbarians have taken care to remove every obstacle, and vanquish all your scruples. Listen to me. I send you a letter from Hermacantha. She still lives ; I did not deceive myself in my presentiments ; she calls you incessantly. Will you dare to resist me after you have read her letter ? Will you dare, more than this, after what I am going to tell you ? Heaven grant that there may be still time for you to change your resolution ! One of

your persecutors has just left my prison. He is happy and triumphant. A revolutionary decree, which he has shown me, gives him your hand! His extreme emotion prevented him from taking notice to me, or of taking notice himself, of the qualifying clause which this *pretended* law contains. I have concealed it from him; it is this:—*provided that she is not already engaged to a defender of the country.* This expression is, I believe, no more than customary form; but, with aid of this, and the measures which the Duke and I have taken, you may escape the fatal lot which awaits you this day, without fail, if you persist. With what impatience do I not wait your reply!

By a single word, Mademoiselle, you are going to insure the existence of your Hermacantha, and of twelve children. Oh! make haste to that *yes* so much desired. Outrun, by your swiftness, the fate which is pursuing you. If it overtakes

you, you will yourself be the sole cause, either of your death or of your misery. I have done all that it was humanly possible for me to do ; the rest depends upon yourself alone.—Give your decree, then ; dispose of us all !

LETTER XLV.

From Hermacintha to Maria.

DEAR child, adieu ! I am dragged far from thee. I leave thee alone, exposed to all dangers, to all the enemies of beauty, innocence, and virtue ! Dear, very dear Maria, adieu ! I despair of seeing thee. I believe it is to the colonies that they are carrying me.

If this letter reaches thee, if the honest post-master, who has promised me his endeavours, keeps his word, make haste to join me ; if not, all is at an end with my Hermacintha. I feel that I cannot long sustain our separation. All is over with thy friend, if she must quit this continent without thee. Adieu, then, for ever ; adieu, my dearest child !

LETTER XLVI.

*From Maria to Mademoiselle de
Melrode.*

I HAVE received your letter and Her-
macintha's. I have obeyed you ; be sa-
tisfied. I am setting out with the Duke.
I go to save my mother ; may I have the
consolation of being useful !

LETTER XLVII.

*From Hermacintha to the Prelate of
Arnhem.*

You have seen by my last letter, that Maria was waiting at the door of my prison, while I thought her far away. Not only the barbarians laughed at her anxieties and tears, but they concealed them from me. They came afterward to tell me, that I was condemned to deportation, and, that along with my orphans, I was to be sent to French Guiana. Overwhelmed by the certainty of leaving Maria, I know not what I did, nor what I said, during a whole week. I only know, that jolted in a rude carriage, and waited upon by a disgusting woman, my tears and cries never ceased to mingle themselves with the shiverings of a

fever. I arrived, however, at Nantes, where I learned that my young companions were all already embarked, in a vessel which I saw in the middle of the river.

It had occurred to me on the road, in an interval of calm, to confide a letter for Paris to a post-master, whose honest and benevolent aspect prejudiced me in his favour. My letter was to Maria, calling upon her to think of nothing but joining me.

After my arrival at Nantes, I had almost lost every hope of seeing her again; and expected every hour to embark, which the violence of the winds and waves had hitherto prevented, when I received a courier from Maria. My letter had reached her, and the post-master had sent her reply, in spite of the penalty of death which is attached to such an act. What follows is a copy of her letter:—

“ At length, I know where you are. I have need of this consolation, of this support, after the horrible ceremony of my marriage. I shall behold you once more ! To-morrow I shall be in your prison, and shall partake your sorrows, and the pestilential climate to which you are driven. The Duke will be useful to us ; be satisfied ; he is my husband. That hand, which ought never to have been joined with any but Julius’s, is another’s !—The barbarians !”

I did not entirely comprehend the meaning of this letter. Mademoiselle de Melrode arrived at last. She gave me all the particulars relative to Maria’s marriage. Scarcely had that sad and gloomy ceremony taken place, when the wretches came to seize my child. A moment later, and she would have been lost ; she would have become the wife

or the victim of a monster. They attempted to force her from the Duke, who, supported by his comrades, and by the heads of the army, not only came off triumphantly from this struggle, but has also obtained the appointment to the command of the persons to be deported, of whom we are a part.

Though I had secretly prepared this painful means of preserving Maria, yet it gave me lively and profound affliction. Even Julius could not have shrunk from it more strongly. My trouble equalled my despair. The approaching arrival of my dear child, and the certainty that it had been impossible to do otherwise, calmed my mind. I felt the necessity of imposing on my pupil, and, when she arrived a few hours after, I left her to believe that her marriage fulfilled all my wishes. Had you seen her look, at that moment, O my father, what pity would you not have

bestowed on her! She could not recover from her amazement. Her heart was so well acquainted with mine, that she did but too easily dive into the deception. But at length, she believed me, or seemed as if she did.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the same to the same.

WE were ready to set sail. Maria, the Duke, and Melrode, were with me in the boat, and were proceeding to join the vessel in the road. Our young companions, whom we saw on their knees at the stern, lifted their innocent hands alternately to Heaven and to us. The wind was blowing strong ; the waves swelled and fell upon each by turns ; the sailors were busy, running along the deck, and calling to one another, among the cordage, while Maria and myself, nicely balanced in the little skiff, endeavoured to hide in each other's bosoms the deep emotions of our souls. " God Almighty," said the orphan, in a low voice, " have mercy on the inno-

cent victims who have suffered at the Hermitage ; have mercy upon the lovely and tender children who surround me. I implore thee, from the bottom of my heart, to put us to death, or to leave us on this continent, which contains the ashes of my Julius !”

O my father ! you have good reason to assure us that Providence, that our *God*, our merciful guardian, listens to the prayers of the good, when their contrition is perfect, their virtue real, and their repentance sincere. The extreme emotion of Maria, the tears with which she covered my bosom, sufficiently attested the depth and reality of her sensations. Heaven heard her voice, and listened to it. Scarcely had we reached the vessel, when discharges of artillery were heard from the city. The people thronged upon the wharfs ; a thousand cries were uttered with phrenzy. We could see at a distance the same persons who, just before, had been mournful and dejected,

dancing, singing, and running about with joy. Boats came to us with orders not to sail. "Terror is past," cried they, from every side; "all our sorrows are at an end." The crew fell on their knees; a pious ecclesiastic, who was to have been deported with us, sung aloud the *Te Deum*; every one joined his voice to that of the priest, and scarcely had we finished, when messengers came to tell us we were free. The same men who, a few minutes before, had escorted us to the boat with sinister and ferocious looks, were become kind and cheerful. Joy was universal.

Meanwhile, Maria was still in grief at this sudden change. "Why not a few days sooner?" said she, pressing me to her heart.

We quitted, without delay, our melancholy vessel. Orders had been given to the frigate to come into the basin, and we re-landed, free and together, Maria, myself, Melrode and the Duke.

O my father, how every day's experience teaches me to esteem and bless you more ! “ In the midst of the greatest perils,” you have often said, “ we should think only of doing our duty ; the rest is the task of Providence.” And how can any one have learned this better than ourselves, on this unexpected day !

LETTER XLIX.

From the same to the same.

Do you call to mind the general gaiety, the universal emotion of pleasure, which all nature seems to feel in the spring, when, released from the bonds which held her captive, and carried cold and death into her bosom, she triumphs, and boldly lifts her head, crowned with verdure and with flowers? Similar to this is what may be remarked through the whole extent of France, since the fall of the wretch Robespierre. Every one is congratulating his fellow, and the streets are filled with neighbours just escaped from their prisons or their hiding places, and astonished at beholding each other again! In observing the joy of the crowd which is unchained, and that of

the crowd which receives the other with open arms, one asks oneself, “What, then, is become of all the famous *terrorists*?”

Meantime, how changed France appears to me, since the Revolution. I can no longer find that amiable nation which I knew in my childhood, when, with my parents, I wandered on the enchanting banks of the Seine, the Loire, and the Saône. I can find no more those antique families which united, what the vulgar think incompatible with each other, gaiety and good sense, decency, virtue and the pleasures; politeness and sincerity; the graces and solidity of character.

O noble France! has a single tempest destroyed every thing belonging to thee? It has tarnished thy lustre, perhaps, alas! for ever. I see on all sides nothing but new faces, new manners, new conditions; and if I did not hear the French language spoken, and see before me irrefragable proofs that these men are the

same as I formerly knew, I should believe myself at the antipodes.

What is become of those pretty French women, lively, gay, but virtuous before all things ; beautiful in their forms, and graceful in their manners ? They wore, in their quick and intelligent looks, an obliging disposition toward all, a lovely smile for their acquaintances, and especially for their friends. The aged women, the little girls, even the plain and ugly, all had agreeable manners ; and all their countenances seemed to say, “ I belong to Paris, and I am happy.”

Now, what a difference ! The storm has respected nothing. As, in a tempest, the delicate flowers, the tender buds, perish the first, so, in the political whirlwind, the violence of which will terrify us long to come, the gentle virtues, innocence, and the graces, have preceded in their fall the ruin of the larger trees. More durable than those of the hurricane, these ravages, alas ! will be effaced.

very slowly, perhaps never. The disorders of these saturnalia have soiled the purity of the heart ; augmented previous failings, and corrupted the good qualities ; and, if we could entertain any doubt on this subject, the disquietude, the strong and agitated expression of every countenance, would sufficiently prove to us the cruel overthrow which the mixture and sport of the passions have every where produced. Those among the French whom I see endeavouring to recover their ancient character, and remind us of their fathers ; even those seem but to enable me, by force of the contrast, to judge the better of the extent of the change. Their manners, and their bloomless gaiety appear artificial ; their good and gracious qualities, amiable aforetime, spoiled at present, betray the trace of selfishness, and of the rapid but violent passage of that fever which has changed all constitutions, and which

has reached all individuals, even those who have most struggled against it.

Dear prelate, how my heart is wrung, when I pass one of those château, formerly cheerful and inhabited, the lovely abode of peace and competence, but now melancholy and deserted !

War, destruction, and death, show me their horrible ruins ; or, rather, I see with bitterest affliction, in the spots which those scourges have spared, the still more hideous results of corruption and vice.

My heart, torn, at this sight, by a thousand painful sensations, expands itself in tears and sobs, which my friends think the measure of my grief, but which expresses only a trivial part !

Whither shall I turn my looks, to give ease to my affliction ? Where shall I find some motives to consolation, some motives to the love of life ? What shall I hope again, when order, peace, and

French urbanity seem exiled for ever? when, instead of that gentle march, progressive toward social and individual happiness, I see the chaos of manners and affairs become more and more complete? when, for the destruction of every thing, I see, on all sides, falsehood, injustice, wickedness, and folly. Ah! if the recollection of my country, and of yourself, my father; if Maria, my orphans, and that secret but imperious voice of duty, did not come to hold me back on the edge of the precipice, I feel that I should soon fall to its base.

Adolphus and Adelaide are arrived at Paris. The latter has saved her husband, and in the conduct necessary to that purpose, has discovered extraordinary zeal and courage. Adolphus was condemned to death; and already he was led away from the bar, when his wife drew him into the middle of the hall, tore open his clothes with violence, and showed his wounds to the spectators:

“ You assassinate him !” said she, in an energetic voice, “ and his blood has incessantly flowed, and still flows, for his country and for you !” She opened, as she said these words, the bandage of a wound not yet entirely healed, and the blood flowed.—The beauty, and the generous enthusiasm of Adelaide, the masculine and remarkable graces of Adolphus, moved the people. The mob of *bonnets rouges* murmured ; the judges became alarmed, and the sentence was revoked. They changed the decree of death for that of perpetual imprisonment, which Adelaide was permitted to share ; and the same event which delivered us from the bloodsuckers of the horrible Carrier, gave back our friends to liberty and our prayers.

Adelaide’s health has suffered by these occurrences. She was delivered in prison of a little girl, whose godmother I was, and to whom I have given the name of Georgina.

This child is the picture of its father. It is impossible not to envy the lot of Adelaide and Adolphus. If one could be, during a whole life, what they are at this moment, doubtlessly happiness would consist in love. When the eyes of the youthful mother pass alternately from the features of her husband to those of her child, all the three, even the little creature itself, seem absorbed in too sweet sensations to be able to express them.

Adolphus's happiness pierces to the quick the husband of Maria. He loves with violence. She is governed by an invincible melancholy, and her health grows weaker day after day. When she is better, when she endeavours to allay my fears, and smiles, deep sighs escape, in spite of herself, from her agitated bosom!

The Duke does not love my dear, my incomparable Maria, as she ought to be loved. He is touched only by her sur-

passing beauty. Her noble, pure, and delicate soul ; her perfection of understanding, her just, true, and artless mind ; her touching sensibility ; nay, even her tears and sufferings, are not seen by the Duke ;—he imagines nothing beyond the possession of his wife.—Hitherto I have nothing to reproach him with ; but I see that a storm is gathering.

I owe him the justice to say, that far from making his complaints to the world, or permitting his inward struggles to be seen, the nobleness of his sentiments and conduct is complete. This deceives Maria, and she imagines things can always remain as they are.

She wishes that we should return to the Hermitage ; but beside that every thing there is destroyed, I have my fears of that residence, for her, and for myself.

The Duke designs to pass some time on the distant property of which he bears the name ; and we are setting out imme-

diately. We shall live in a small town, undisturbed by the distractions of the world. We shall forget, perhaps, the happy days which we have passed, and those which they promised us.

“O sister!” said Maria, yesterday, “who would have said, that a cold and serious friendship from me would be almost more than the lot of my husband? Eternal tears, the sorrows, the recollections of my heart, shut out from it for ever all consolation. I must live, to feel death instant by instant.”

Poor child! thou thinkest thyself nevertheless fulfilling all the duties of a wife! May thy error speedily cease! Thy health fails through the absence of him whom thou wilt never see more. What wilt thou become when another shall force thee to feign for him the tenderness thou canst never feel, but which, nevertheless, thou owest.

The Duke will pay little regard to the grief and tears of his wife. His opinion

is, that my sex is always entrenched behind these two barriers ; and that nothing can be done with us, but by boldly overleaping and braving these feeble ramparts. This sentiment is that of all men of the world, given up to dissipation and the fire of the senses ; and what must we presage from such a character !

I have perceived that he combats the invincible resistance of his wife. The latter fears that I shall pronounce against her, and therefore hides her troubles from me. But I guess them all ; and, in spite of myself, I see but too well, that Maria must either yield to her husband, or perish. Her health and strength are unable to resist these continual combats, which, with their insupportable agitation, make her feel more forcibly her eternal sorrows.

The delightful situation of Adolphus and Adelaide, their cheerfulness, good sense, and constant happiness fills Maria

with a still deeper sadness. I guess the sentiments which she feels. They are natural ; she would have been still happier, more worthy of envy, if possible, with my unfortunate brother.

LETTER L.

From the same to the same.

THE struggle is past.—Maria, already united to the Duke by indestructible bonds ; Maria is his for ever. The first smile of happy love, that gentle rapture which I was at the moment of seeing spring in the countenances of my brother and Maria ; that felicity of two creatures whom I had prepared so long in advance —another has pretended to enjoy. Pardon my own disquietude, O my father ! it is excusable at this distressful moment.

The Duke, without my perceiving it, had made efforts toward a greater intimacy with his wife. He had accustomed her to receive him in her apartment more frequently, and at later hours ;

but when he led the discourse to their reciprocal situations, “O best of men, after him,” said Maria, with a supplicating voice, “ask of me no sacrifice beyond my powers! As I have not two lives, so I cannot love another than Julius. He is dead, it is true; but I am not so yet, and it is in death only I can change! Alas! how is it possible to love twice? Can the sighs of a breaking heart have any charms for you? Cease to set before me the enchanting picture of domestic happiness; the example of Adelaide would be enough; but I cannot live for ever, the prey of my sorrows, and after me——”

The Duke wept with her, promised her every thing she desired; and, by the time he came to relate their conversation to me, his first impatience was returned. Strange contradictions of the human heart!

I was confirmed in my opinion, that the destruction of her health would be

the consequence of her griefs. I reflected on the last words of her conversation with the Duke :—" I cannot live for ever, the prey of my sorrows, and after me—"

I availed myself of the evening of a day which we had passed almost wholly at Adelaide's. That charming nurse, devoted to her condition, and deriving from it the truest happiness, happiness so complete, and exempt from every painful sentiment, appeared an angel.

I spoke to Maria with tenderness, but with decision. I resisted her tears and supplications. If you had seen her, my father, at that solemn moment, how you would have admired her celestial aspect! On her knees, her hands joined, she conjured me to leave her at least the consolation of being no other's than her only love's. Her beautiful hair fell down, her shawl was drawn aside, and, in her disorder, the portrait of Julius presented itself to my eyes. Poor chil-

dren ! both unfortunate, and unfortunate through myself ! I mingled my tears with her's. Nevertheless, the voice of reason was the strongest, and I resolved to intrust her wholly to her husband, and promise every thing which he had a right to expect from the best of wives. " Be," said I, embracing her tenderly, " as good a wife, as gentle, as submissive to your destiny, as you have been an excellent friend and an excellent daughter." She dried her tears, which continually sprang afresh, in spite of her efforts. " They shall cease," said she, with difficulty, " they shall cease ; I promise you they shall." She tried to affect cheerfulness, and in vain called a smile upon her lips ; and holding out her hand to me, with the portrait of Julius, she added, " It is done, then, my Hermacantha, and I ought no longer to keep even his image !" " Take it back, my cousin ; you may always

keep it ; you are more happy than Maria !”—“ No, no ; keep this remembrancer. Your husband is not ignorant of any thing you do ; of any of your secret thoughts. Faithful mirror of your soul, your countenance is unsullied by dissimulation ; all that you feel is read in it.”—“ No,” replied she, “ Julius always in my heart, but never, never before my eyes !” Her tears flowed again. I accepted the portrait, well resolved to restore it to her at no distant day. Her husband and myself were desirous that she should soon find it in her jewel-box, not to wear it, but to preserve it as the memorial of a brother tenderly beloved.

Imagine, my father, the torments of my soul on this cruel evening ! . How deceived are they, who believe that the sufferings and griefs most insupportable, depend upon the great affairs and great occurrences of the world ! It is be-

neath the humble roofs of honest and unfortunate hearts, that lie the real sorrows !

I cast a look on the portrait of my dear brother. I read an inscription on the painting itself—*The death of a beloved friend commences our own.*

This motto will suffice to give you an exact idea of Maria's situation ! She appeared to me to have arrived at the moment of obedience and resignation. I led her to her bed-chamber.

LETTER LI.

From the same to the same.

THERE is, in the events of our life, an order, a succession, which seems to be the effect of chance, but which I much rather believe regulated by Providence. If it is not always to our satisfaction, it is, and always must be conformable to the end of our existence.

The force of political events, of inevitable necessity, has placed my young ward in the arms of another than Julius, against our will, and against that of Maria. Scarcely had this taken place, when circumstances changed entirely ; all the enemies of our repose, all our persecutors, disappeared ; barbarous laws, tyrannical force, which had dragged us to this unhappy point, suddenly ceased !

We became free—when it was no longer time!

Now, when I have obtained from Maria, with a thousand pains and difficulties, the entire sacrifice, I perceive, that with more resistance, more address, a few weeks more delay, I should have been to spare her all that bitter affliction, that ineffacable grief, which the last surrender of her person has for ever caused her. Alas! the Duke, a few weeks ago the lover, the violent and furious lover of his wife, is now no more than polite and gallant. He continues to love Maria, but with a levity and self-sufficiency which I cannot endure. He maintains, there is no doubt, guilty connections with lost women; but I hope Maria will always remain ignorant of them!

For him, he sees not that she gives herself up as a victim; he considers nothing but the beauty of his wife. The latter makes it a duty, and forces herself to conceal the sorrows which devour

her ; she succeeds in disguising her repugnance before the world, but not entirely in my eyes.

She has established perfect order in her house, and every one must be deceived as to her inward state of mind. She has such gentleness, such equanimity ; is never gay, but never in ill humour.

I have inspired her with a strong idea, and a strong feeling, of the delights of maternal love ; she envies the lot of Adelaide, and that is so far a happiness.

We are departing for Ast. It is said that travelling is the best diversion of the mind. As soon as we shall be arrived, she will find herself as in a new world. Thus, not giving her time to recollect herself, we shall finish the year, and, with that, reach a new epoch of real consolation, if our hopes are confirmed.

LETTER LII.

From Adelaide to Maria.

KNOW, lovely Maria, that Georgina hopes to have a brother or a sister toward the end of the year. Wish for a boy for me; my Adolphus will be so happy to see himself possessed of an heir! Then, we shall have employment for both; at present, he disputes with me, in cares and attentions to his daughter. “Adelaide,” said he, one day, “I could never have believed that it was so delightful to wait upon a little creature.” He has entertained a tender veneration for me, ever since he has seen me nurse my child. He believes sincerely that women have great advantages over men. “How happy are women! they are the mothers of their chil-

dren," added he, further, "and, for a long space, they are the supply of their daily food!" I was disposed to be merry, in replying in the following words: "You shall not take away any one of the privileges of our sex. Boast yourselves gentlemen! put on the supremacy of which you are so proud; a mother braves your pride, and your pretended prerogatives, and never has reason to envy them."

I was obliged to be cautious with Adolphus. His pain was visible; I consoled him, by admitting him to the honour of partaking in my care of his daughter. It is said that men ought not to employ themselves with children yet in their cradle; that these little things are not made for them, and that they debase them.—I know not how other men are, but with my Adolphus it is very different. I am not blind to his merit; but no great man, past, present, or future, seems to me worthy of being

compared with him; seeing, as I do, this young man, formerly so impetuous, so volatile, and giddy, now reserved, rational, tender, and modest, serving me, and serving my infant, not only with pleasure, but with pride. I see with pride myself, I must confess it, those hands, which were honourably armed for the defence of their country, press my daughter to a bosom covered with noble wounds. How I pity the husbands that are different from mine! they deprive themselves *of the greatest sweet which Heaven has placed upon earth!* Our Hermacantha has good reason to think so!

Though we have not yet been united many *years*, there are, in regard to Adolphus and myself, a multitude of circumstances which make our relationship an old one. I am obliged to reflect, to count, to forget my sentiments and his image, to call to my mind that our union

is not ancient, but is still to be called new !

At my confinement, dear Maria, in that prison which, notwithstanding its dark and melancholy appearance, I shall never see again without pleasure and emotion, I was six weeks without leaving my room ; Adolphus scarcely left, during that period, the side of my bed. He watched, served, and comforted me ; and in such a moment, the caresses of a husband, whatever were his figure, must be exquisitely interesting ! Judge, then, how the fine exterior of Adolphus must have appeared to me, in whom I saw distinctly that Georgina had completed what I had previously began. A service derives greater value from the merit of him who renders it. To the least attentions of my husband, belong a crowd of sweet sensations. “ He that serves me is not a hireling,” said I ; “ but takes a pure and real interest in

me, who have doubled his existence. I feel my sufferings less than he does; I know all their extent, while his tenderness exaggerates them." Hence I concealed my smaller pains, to spare him larger. But, when I became seriously ill, I abandoned myself entirely to him, sure that I had nothing more to do, however severe I thought my sufferings, from the moment that I confided them to him. All that could be humanly done, he did. Dear Maria, one thing afflicts me; it is, that I am too happy to be so always; and, then, that the time must come when we must die separately!—Ah! if we could but go together, at a single blow!

I have experienced in the world a very agreeable surprize. I have met with persons who have insisted upon it that we were not man and wife. "They are brother and sister," said these strangers. Do you know why? Because they see us always together;

because, in our calm familiarity, our looks have nothing to conceal, and we appear always to understand one another. The world, the critics, may censure us, and welcome ; we shall never change. Ah ! how sincerely. I pity those wretched individuals, condemned to gross and vulgar chains which present them with nothing but occasions of dissimulation, and hide from them the inexhaustible sources of enjoyments for ever new, of purity of heart, of truth, and of the love which is alone worthy of its name, that which is founded on esteem, and on true and unalterable friendship.

You ask me for many particulars of my domestic life, and I obey you. You have discovered too much interest in what concerns me, to let me fear that I shall weary you.

You desire to know exactly all our occupations. My little girl is their principal object. I have persuaded my husband to adopt a fixed plan, and to keep

to it scrupulously. His French vivacity has had some difficulty in submitting to it, but now he finds his happiness in it. We hear with sorrow the striking of the clock call upon us to change our employments; but experience teaches us, that if it grieves us to quit the more agreeable at precise moments, it is, at the same time, the best means of returning to them the sooner, and with the same pleasure as before.

The tediously long evenings of winter, and the endless days of summer, have never appeared such to me. Excepting the first months of my marriage, and the time when I was ill, Adolphus found himself much employment, and even in prison he did not lose his time. But I must acknowledge that we frequently interrupt our daily tasks to pay short visits; our meals and evenings are entirely consecrated to ourselves. Adolphus rarely absents himself; and yet, I

am sure, oftener than he wishes. Take an example. He was obliged to dine yesterday at a great lady's ; he was under the necessity of accepting the invitation, for it was the fourth time it had been given ; beside, he was to make an excuse for me. I cannot endure grand dinners ; I love a snug little dinner with my friends ; that is, a few at a time. Grand dinners of ceremony, where one knows not by whose side one sits, and is obliged to converse with those for whom one little cares, seem to me, to express myself in Hermacantha's manner, *stage-plays of society*. On Adolphus's return, I was agreeably surprized ; I had not expected him till an hour later, and I thanked him for having preferred my company. " You owe me no thanks," said he, " the most brilliant entertainments, all the pretended pleasures of the world, the most lovely women, when you are not with me, only fatigue me ;

they thwart and displease me ; I consider them only as obstacles which separate me from you, and delay my freedom.”

Dear Maria, is not my Adolphus amiable ? His words are much less so than his conduct and sentiments. Unaffected, natural in every thing, if any flattering expression toward his wife escape him, it is always without being designed beforehand. Once pronounced, it may be believed, because it is the truth ; he confirms it himself, because he would not have uttered it if it had not been real.

How I love to answer your letters, my dear cousin !—Your wishes, your questions, are always after my own heart. But it is not the same with those to which I am sometimes obliged to listen. I wish, however, to communicate to you my replies on two points of which you say nothing ; they are, fortune and commandment. What I can tell you on

these subjects will make you better acquainted than any thing else with my Adolphus. I have rarely taken the trouble to give a complete reply to these two questions, because, in the great number of my acquaintances, one or two only were moved by a real interest in asking them. I dare believe in that of Maria, who is so capable of appreciating the happiness I enjoy.

These two articles claim my consideration of the conduct of my husband. Before our marriage, he asked for a private conversation with me, and addressed me in these words, which I have not forgotten, nor ever shall forget.

“ Adelaide, before we are united for ever to each other, I wish for an explanation on a subject in which our hearts go for nothing.

“ Though I love you sincerely, as all my life shall prove to you, it is needful, for the foundation of our mutual happi-

ness, to understand each other upon that which is foreign to our sentiments, and may do them injury.

“ Our parents desire that fortune should be one of the principal bonds of our union ; and I also am of opinion, that it ought to be the second condition essential to marriage.

“ Those who think that it is every thing, in regard to the happiness of two married persons, deceive themselves, as much as those youthful hearts which think that love alone is sufficient.

“ The suitableness of character, true friendship, and, in short, love, is the first object to be considered ; the second, but the second essential and indispensable object, is fortune. These two things cannot be separated without danger ; they are, and they ought to remain, inseparable. I flatter myself, that the first presents you with no difficulty,” said he, smiling ; “ as to the second, both the one and the other of us is more wealthy than

is necessary. I demand of you a consent, that one or the other should renounce his or her fortune ; without this, there can be no entire union, constant agreement to be hoped for."

I did not hesitate to choose, that the renunciation should be made by me.—

"I surrender it entirely to you," said I.

"While I am giving you my heart and my hand ; while I am hoping happiness from you alone, I can easily lay aside every other resource."

"I thank you," said he, with a touching emotion, throwing himself at my knees. "This entire confidence is worthy of my love, and of my eternal devotion. Dear Adelaide, it is then really true, that I have found the woman after my heart ; she who, from my infancy, I have pleased myself in imagining ! No difference of interests under the same roof ; be you then the sovereign ; I wish to be only your prime minister. We shall always be agreed, because you

consent to the instant removal of that which might be the occasion of misunderstanding between us.”

We then passed nearly a fortnight in reducing into brief a little plan for the regulation of our house, our occupations, our affairs, our habits, and our reciprocal privileges. I shall not let you see this sort of little constitution; yours is better for you.

We disclosed our resolutions to our parents. They were astonished. The article of fortune appeared to my family a little hard, and was but ill adapted to our cold, but indestructible Dutch pride. They wished to reserve it for me, in case of separation. Adolphus became furious at the very idea, and would not hear of it. At length, all consented, and gave us their approbation.

As to the domestic demand, all that you can assure yourself of is, that most certainly there is but one will in the house. Adolphus does nothing of any

consequence upon which we have not mutually reflected, nor before we have examined and discussed it under its various aspects. For me, my rule is the will of my husband. I am convinced that our destiny is to follow that of the master whom we have chosen ; and that the liberty of this choice is the greatest act of power which is allowed us.

Hitherto, nothing has deranged our plan. Troubles, misfortunes, a prison, the fear of the scaffold, nothing has been able to alienate us from each other.

My Adolphus cannot change. He has returned into the right road, after having known the errors of youth. He sets them at their just value, and there is no risk.

As for me, if ever I could change, he would lead me back ; for it is impossible for any one to merit the esteem and respect of his wife more than Adolphus does.

I have accepted the passive power of

sovereignty, to leave to him the entire government. I have only to complain of the docility and absolute devotion of my first minister, who, if he could, would reduce himself to the post of secretary. He is incapable of any thing but loving me. I am the end of all his thoughts and actions. While he does nothing but for me, can I do otherwise than seek to guess and prevent his smallest wishes, in order that I may have the appearance of commanding; that I may really obey him in spite of himself?

LETTER LIII.

From Hermacantha to Adelaide.

It is true, then, excellent Adelaide, that all is illusion in this world ! You alone have a right to think the contrary. May you always retain your opinion !— We conceive projects ; we cause ourselves a thousand cares to make them succeed ; and, when we approach the end, when all seems to have answered, all suddenly changes !

We are fixed near the little town of Ast. Maria's health is always feeble ; she does not cease to suffer. Her husband, completely satisfied, participates in nothing of her disquietude.

When I hear my friend sigh, when her red and weary eyes inform me what has been her occupation in my absence, I

feel her situation. I blame my tenderness and cares, and repent of having sought all the means possible of preserving our existence. Nevertheless, I know not how it is, but the secret impulse which directs my actions is so strong, and sometimes so independent of my reason, which condemns it, that I do not believe myself following my own sentiments, but the direction of a superior authority ! and that gives me a senseless hope of a less dismal ending—as if, any were reserved for us but death !—
O Adelaide ! all is over with your friends ; be happy yourself ; at least, be so for us all !

The Duke has found in his little town a great number of acquaintances. Young, amiable, animated by the success which he has had in the world, and by the vanity to which he is inclined, Maria is a continual occasion of triumph to him. I cannot preserve myself from the most lively fears on this subject. They live

in the greatest harmony, but with a coldness the most extreme. The one discovers less than ever the precious qualities of his wife, who, on her side, does not imagine, nor can not imagine, all the wrongs and misconduct of her husband. If she discovered at length that he has no regard for her whatever, I should fear that she would hold in horror my desire of seeing her a mother, and would then be wholly lost ; for only that can save her.

We came through Strasburg. There, dear Adelaide, we heard accounts of all that you had suffered, all that you had done.

The Duke, being almost seignior of the place at which we live, we are obliged to surround ourselves with the society which it contains. What can I say of it, which you cannot easily imagine for yourself? Neither decency, delicacy, taste, nor morals ; a blind thirst of pleasure, or rather of motion ; avarice, trea-

chery, low cunning, the most inconceivable falsehood, and the completest irreligion, are the objects which have presented themselves to my observation. It is so every where, will, perhaps, be the answer given me ; they are very ancient vices, and preceded the Revolution, and the destruction of all existing institutions. Agreed ; but at least they were formerly tinged with a grace, a delicacy, a sort of decorum, which is no longer respected.

A young lady, to whom I was obliged to pay a visit, and who was just confined, treated me with this curious language, to which, you may believe, I took care to give no reply :—“ I am very late in getting rid of all this *mishmash* of children. The carnival is begun ; how happy I shall be, if I get done in good time. I should have been sadly vexed, if I had been confined two months later ! !”

This woman, so enthusiastic for balls

and entertainments, sought with fury for every amusement, while she had close to her a young, amiable, and faithful husband, and two children, who played with their father and their nurse in the most engaging manner. “ I have done very rightly,” said she, again, “ in not nursing my boy ; I should certainly have repented of it if I had ; for that confines and embarrasses one furiously.”

The Duke, sought after, and entertained by all the women, is very assiduous in his attentions to an English lady. The husband of Maria had not entirely deceived me as to his habits ; but what frightful truths do I discover from day to day ! He is a lost man under this aspect ; and, to make use of the expression of a woman as amiable as celebrated, *he has put women out of his code of morals* ; none is sacred in his view.

LETTER LIV.

From the same to the same.

I was employed in my closet when Maria entered suddenly, and interrupted me; pale, her face lengthened, and her eyes red, I saw that she was ill. She threw herself on my neck. “You are ill,” said I.—“Yes, yes, I suffer a great deal;” and, on saying these words, she fainted. I guessed her state, and made her acquainted with it. It was the fulfilment of my wishes, and gave me much joy.—“I shall be a mother!” said Maria, with extreme astonishment. She looked at me with a bewildered air. At first, I saw glistening in her eyes a flash of pleasure; a moment after, she hid her face in my bosom, and her tears followed. She pressed me forcibly to her heart.

“ My child,” said I, affecting still more satisfaction than I felt, “ make yourself happy now ; you will find, in employing yourself with your infant, that happiness which I found in you.”—“ What!” said Maria, sadly, “ I shall be able to pay to another what I owe to you ?”—“ Yes, dear Maria, a mother never dies ; she lives in another self. Proceeding from yourself, and nourished at your breast, it will love you as you have loved Hermacintha—and still more.”—“ No, impossible!” and she embraced me tenderly. “ There is, then, some happiness still to be hoped for us !” added she ;—“ my child will resemble you ;” and she looked at me attentively, as at the beginning of our conversation. She ran over all the lineaments of my figure, as if they were new to her. Seated on my knees, her arm round my neck, she became pensive, and talked, as it were, to herself, in these words :—“ I shall be a mother ! I shall feel my infant stroke my cheeks

with its little caressing hands! It will smile, if I smile, and weep with me! Oh! yes, happiness exists! I should like to find some unknown and solitary corner, where to hide what I am to enjoy. It seems to me, that I should be insufficient for it; that strength will fail me, through pleasure, when I hold my infant suspended at my breast.”—She looked at me more attentively still, in finishing these words; threw herself into my arms, and, after some minutes, asked me whom her infant would resemble. I obliged her to be silent: I made her remember, that a certain name was forbidden us. I did not doubt that she was thinking of my brother at the moment. “Yes,” said she, “let us think of nothing but my infant; solely of him. A good mother ought to forget herself for her other self.”—As she said this, she saw Mademoiselle de Melrode, took her arm, and went out in a mixed state of joy, chagrin, and indefinable emotion; she

wished to smile, and she wept at the same moment.

I was not long in rejoining her, and she talked of nothing but you and Georgina. To love you, and imitate you, is her constant desire. Happy Adelaide ! happy mother ! What finer recompense can heaven bestow on virtue, since your existence only is a benefit to others.

Maria's husband came to me afterward. He is overjoyed at the pregnancy of his wife ; but vanity wholly occupies his heart. He is overjoyed to prove to the world, that his marriage is not unfortunate, and at the hope of obtaining an heir.

Maria would never have sustained herself against her emotion, if Julius had been her husband. She thinks only of her infant ; she seems sometimes to forget her misfortunes : but, if I am not strangely mistaken, her love is not unconnected with her cheerfulness. Yes-

terday evening, she said, “What combinations, and multiplied relations, there are in our affections, Hermacintha! It seems to me, that my infant will not be a stranger to Julius. If we had been united it would have been my child, as it will be now. How happy our child would have made us! Now, I shall only have the idea of a part of that happiness.—O, Hermacintha, how, happy a mother is!”—Let us compare, Adelaide, this pure delight, and your happiness, with those of the woman of whom I just spoke. That unhappy creature sees only toys in her children, which amuse her while they laugh and play moderately, but which irritate and fatigue her if they become noisy.

I remember a day which I passed with you. My little god-daughter was agitating herself violently on the floor, and you, wicked woman! saw, without distress, her little arms extended to ask for the playthings which you held out to

her: but when she had reached you at last, and when, climbing up your knees, she possessed herself in triumph of the objects of her desire, I saw you bear patiently, and even with pleasure, her noisy cries, and violent starts. She tore and spoiled your clothes, but you covered her with kisses, of which another than a mother would have been a little jealous; and nothing could tire you. Adelaide! this was because your infant is not your toy; it is yourself; or, more still, it is Adolphus and Adelaide united.

The Duke would be a riddle to me, if I had not long since reflected on our irregularities and inconsistencies. He cannot change; he has known Maria too late. In my conversations with him, I have endeavoured to discover his system; and I perceive, that having begun to think after his morals were already deranged, he has adopted every good principle, and every good resolution, except in what regards women; on this

head, he has left the bent, already formed, to follow its course.

When, like him, a man is capable of reasoning, of reflection, and of just conclusions, and when vanity and the heat of the passions do not blind him, he ought to discover truth. It strikes him, doubtlessly, from time to time; but, in this case, a man desires positively to find, in dissipation, and his accustomed course of life, that happiness which so many individuals look for, and imagine there, and which really is not. He remembers that he is engaged in this route, with this end, and he is determined to gain it by one way or other. He is unwilling to lose any thing of his first hopes. Secretly, he feels that he is already no longer in condition to change, and obstinately persists in the desire to sustain this sort of battle with himself.

LETTER LV.

From the same to the same.

You imagine to yourself, dear Adelaide, that your friends see their sorrows diminish, and that they experience, at the least, some degree of tranquillity? Alas! much is wanting to this. Maria, my dear Maria, has still to suffer! Why am I obliged to suffer too, in a manner so painful to me and mine?—In the irreparable misfortune into which events have plunged Maria, I knew that she could have no real contentment; but, I had every reason to believe, that at least, her husband would never disturb her tranquillity through the errors and vices of the times.

I saw that he had no true attachment to his angelic wife; for he has no

heart for depth of sentiment. Given up to the disorder of the senses, and possessed of little tenderness, he loves only by caprice and by fits ; but, persons the least impassioned themselves often exacting much of others, I feared that the Duke would not obtain from Maria the tenderness of sentiment, and all the affections of a heart long occupied, and occupied for ever.

I am deceived both as to the one supposition and the other. My cousin's husband is the most dissolute of young men. The hand and person of Maria have filled up the measure of his desires. They have satisfied him ; and now, he changes, and with astonishing rapidity. His wife is ignorant of his greatest offences, but she ceases to esteem him ; and that is the greatest misfortune which can befall a young married woman. I foresee that nothing can change him. The dissolution of his manners is a habit of his earliest youth ; it is the re-

sult of his reflections and opinions. His passion for Maria had at first purified his sentiments, or put a restraint upon them. Now, that this *pretty wife* is no novelty to him, he has re-assumed entirely his ancient character.

I have made it a duty to watch him, for the interests of my ward ; but I have concealed from her, as well as from you, his unpardonable deeds, and crimes which would be worthy of exemplary punishment, if they were not so common.

I have attempted an explanation with him, and to make him see all the horror of his conduct ; but we could not comprehend each other. He employs his understanding to blind and mislead him ; he sees no harm, where I see so much. He laughs and jests on subjects the most worthy of serious thought, the fit objects of terror. We do not speak the same language.

The conduct of Maria is worthy of the

ss

ss

ss

s

ss

ss

ss

ss

greatest praise. Her husband fears her ill opinion, and seems to increase in his respect for her ; this ought to be so ; the more he debases himself, the higher she is placed above him. She knows, in part, the misconduct of her husband, and is deeply wounded. Her extreme delicacy renders her very scrupulous as to her relations with him. “ I am afraid to see him,” said she ; “ he is polluted in my eyes ; I tremble when he approaches, and feel myself degraded.” I guess her meaning ; you cannot imagine all she suffers. Poor Maria ! on the threshold of life, behold thee, then, in spite of thyself, and of us, condemned to the depth of misfortune, to the continual torment of feigning a contentment and tranquillity which will not be thy lot. Meantime, when, in the world, any thing is spoken of which bears a relation to the faults of the Duke, you should see her so conduct herself as to draw the greatest possible share of re-

spect and esteem upon her husband ; and this without falsehood, without denial of the truth, without losing the dignity which becomes her, because it proceeds from a soul imbued with virtue, which knows and is sure of its own value, and not from a surly pride without foundation, beneath which is often concealed a nullity of heart and mind. The most clear-sighted eyes, the persons most acquainted with the errors of the Duke, doubt their reality, at sight of the interest and benevolence which Maria manifests for him.

He is connected with a woman despicable as well as despised ; and, thanks to his folly, nothing is wanting to the scandal. The public is informed of all. To crown the horrors, he calls himself the friend of her husband, whose name is De la Ville ; and has even a footing in his house, upon I know not what pretext.

At the same time that he cultivates;

this sort of connexion with Madame de la Ville, he testifies to a celebrated dancer, La Corali, the blindest passion. The Duke is generous, more so, perhaps, than his fortune allows. The dancer does not see, without vexation, that her prey is taken away from her, and meditates revenge, the more, as the prudery of the lady, and a certain *decorum* which she still preserves, affords no public proof of her shame; and she affects even to be cruel, and afflicted at having raised a guilty flame, and sees the Duke only with great caution, and much mystery.

Last Sunday, when all the town was in promenade, the dancer, who dogged her rival, discovered that she was gone out in the same carriage with the Duke, without livery, and was driving into the suburbs. La Corali, who had taken her measures before-hand, and given the best instructions to her coachman and servants, set out after her rival with the utmost swiftness, and overtook the car-

riage at the barrier, where there was a stoppage to pay the toll. Here the coachmen disputed which should get up to the gate first, and began to strike each other. The pedestrians gathered round. The actress now alighted, and exclaiming against the calm and phlegm of the persons shut up in the other coach, who did nothing to terminate the quarrel, she drew the curiosity of the numerous spectators on the interior of the carriage, and herself opened the door with great vehemence. The Duke and Madame de la Ville were discovered to the public, in much embarrassment.

LETTER LVI.

From the same to the same.

I INFORMED Maria of the irregularities of her husband, as soon as his shame had become notorious. “I am very thankful to you,” said she, “because, if I had been left in ignorance of what every one knows, I should have run the risk of wearing a false countenance, or quite an opposite one to that which I wish to maintain.”

I took upon me to speak to the Duke. I collected all the information and proofs necessary to convict him, in case he should have denied his conduct. After his adventure, he remained constantly at the château. His confusion, without doubt, determined him to this, rather than the request I made to him. The chase had

no charms for him ; he perambulated incessantly all the gardens and places nearest to the town. One day, whether the species of retirement which he imposed on himself, had renewed his former sentiments for his wife, or whether, reflecting on her celestial candour, her sufferings, her resignation and unassuming fortitude, I found him quite another man, sensible, tender, and repentant. A folly of his inconceivable head had also contributed, beyond a question, to this metamorphosis. The Duke had put on a tone with myself which I will never suffer from any man ; and I blush still for him, at the state of abasement to which my just indignation reduced him, in the presence of Maria and Mademoiselle de Melrode.

I profited of this state of repentance and good dispositions in which I saw him, to represent to him, with force, all the horror of his conduct. He attempted to deny it, I made him look at num-

berless and irrefragable proofs, and filled him with trouble, confusion, and astonishment. — He promised an entire change. He remained in this good resolution a fortnight. “It is consoling to see vices and defects change their nature under our eyes,” said Maria. All at once, we recovered from this illusion in a manner equally sudden and disagreeable.

You recollect young Martha, who was promised to Catz. Both are in my service. Martha, young, blooming, and innocent, is a treasure of beauty; her modesty, openess, and, perhaps, even the peacefulness of her heart, more than her North-Holland dress, which disguises without altering her, give her a common appearance, which disappears after a short examination, and discovers a perfect beauty. The more you look at her afterward, and the more you know her, the more you are astonished to find, under this close and cumbersome cos-

tume, new charms of countenance. You know her history with Catz. They were to have been married, when public troubles drove us from our country, and Catz was wounded. Since his cure and return, he has constantly followed our destiny, and their attachment to us was retarded even till now their union. I acceded to their first demand, and named the day of marriage.

An unfortunate chance determined, that this day should be during the retreat and short metamorphosis of the Duke. Retained too long at home, he cast his eyes on the maiden beauty, and opening charms of Martha. He got into conversation with her, questioned her, and rallied her on the moment and ceremony of marriage. In the evening of the day of the ceremony, the Duke was engrossed with this girl ; he held discourse with her, in my presence, to which I thought proper to put an end, though, at this moment, it no longer

alarmed me ; because the marriage was over, and Catz had become the inseparable companion of Martha. I proposed to put Martha on her guard the following morning ; but I was obliged, to save her, to send her off, that very night, to the Hermitage. The Duke was greatly angered to see himself frustrated in his projects ; and, to punish me, he is gone back to Paris !

LETTER LVII.

From Adelaide to Hermacantha.

RECEIVE my earnest felicitations on the birth of Maria's son. Now, we can make ourselves sure of her life, and possibly of her happiness.

The details you have given me have strongly interested me. I pity the Duke for having shunned, and having been unable to value, an event which Adolphus called the happiest moment of his life. This absence of her husband will greatly afflict your cousin; but, as you are with her, doubtlessly her sorrow will be soon effaced. It would have delighted me to share your task, but my little Georgina does not give me a moment of repose; it is a little dæmon, who, however, in spite of all her health

and spirits, would never be able to bear the journey.

I leave to Adolphus to give you some details on the general peace which has just been concluded, as well as on the return of a great number of prisoners who had been thought dead. You will soon, at the least, receive all the particulars possible concerning your unfortunate brother.

LETTER LVIII.

From Adolphus to Mademoiselle de Melrode.

O UNHOPED for news ! Imagine, Mademoiselle, the greatest happiness which can befall your friends ; imagine it, and partake their joy ! It is not an illusion ; it is real.—Yes, Julius, my friend, my companion, my brother, is still alive !

I am about to fly myself to your ladies, though Adelaide is a little unwell. I fear that this resurrection will cause you many sorrows, in exciting the most painful regrets. What will the Duke say to it ?

I send an express, in order that you may have the news at the earliest moment possible. I know not by what means the letter which informs me of his

existence has reached me. Make such use of the news of this important event as your attachment and zeal for the ladies shall inspire.

Soften the surprize first to Hermacinta; that accomplished, she will know well how to prepare Maria. But make haste. Every thing leads me to believe that Julius is already in your vicinity. Some chance, bringing you together before you expect it, may make the discovery too suddenly, and that, perhaps, may not be without fatal effects for all the three. I rely on your affection for them, and on your judgment. Adelaide makes me uneasy. The period of her confinement approaches, and, with it, the pain in her chest increases. She coughs much; and is so determined on nursing her second child herself, that I know not what course to take, to induce her to change a design, at the possible consequences of which I am frightened.

If you do not feel yourself sufficiently

calm to manage the surprize with Her-
macintha, wait for me; I shall arrive
within a very few hours after my courier.

LETTER LIX.

From Adolphus to Adelaide.

BEHOLD me at Ast. Do not scold me, Adelaide, for my slowness to obey thee.

Adelaide, if I have left thee with regret, if I have yielded with difficulty to the necessity of seeing my friends again, it is less my fault than thine. I am only thy soldier.

Let us be serious ; but, to omit nothing, permit me first to kiss thy pretty little hand, kiss it respectfully, without being troublesome ; and, for this purpose, I think it best not to do it so often as I have imagined it in my dreams.

After having expedited my courier to Mademoiselle de Melrode, I became fearful lest Julius should be already near

our friends. I knew that his hermitage was but a few miles from a mineral water which the ladies frequent every other day ; and thou appearedst to me to be astonished that I did not go myself in search of our friends. Thine eyes, in which I have so often read my duty, seemed to say to me, “ Does not thine happiness cost thee some regrets ? Hermacantha and Maria have need of thee ; thou art their only friend ! ” Nevertheless, I was obliged to press thee for a furlough, which in thy heart thou hadst already given me. I set out. I shall say nothing of our adieus, except that I shall tell thee, that I would willingly perform absences for such a reward. If the welcome is equally remarkable, O how I shall enjoy it ! But, unfortunately, one cannot enjoy a welcome without suffering an absence. I well experienced, in quitting thee, the truth and appositeness of the impromptu of our old friend Madame d’Hondetot, and I performed

my journey almost incessantly repeating it :

Prête à me quitter,
Celle que j'adore
Voudroit profiter
D'une moment encore.
Félicité vaine,
Qu'on ne peut saisir ;
Trop près de la peine
Pour être un plaisir. *

MME. D'HONDETOT.

I shall return to thee in a few days after my letter. I forewarn you that I shall surprize you, and be prepared accordingly. Wherever you are, I shall fall at your feet, as from the skies ; as on that day in thy little garden, when, to thy great astonishment, thou sawest me

* The reader will accept with indulgence this hasty translation of the above beautiful lines.—Tr.

Ready to part, one moment more
She whom I love would seize ;
Bliss sought in vain ! in vain possessed !
Too near a pain to please !

between Georgina and thee. What terrifying wrath ! What fire rose into thy little cheeks, when thou recognizedest the guilty intruder ! Well ; it will be the same again !

I reached Ast in eight days, horribly fatigued. I passed every night in my chaise. I disobeyed you, Adelaide ; I could not do otherwise. I even did more ; I carried my wilfulness so far, as to return to you without your permission. Every night, with the exception of one, in my dreams, I have disturbed your curtains, inquired news of you, given the news of me, and kissed you and Georgina ; and the only night in which I did not make this journey, was that which I passed in the mud, with my chaise, postilion and horses.

Joy and happiness reached the ladies, with me, at Ast ; it seemed as if I were their father, or, to say better, as if I were Julius. Melrode made me a sign to keep silence, and Hermacintha added,

“I know not what has happened to Mademoiselle: but, for some days past, she has laughed and talked like a mad thing; your name has been incessantly in her mouth; she has expected you continually, saying, that it was impossible but you would be here soon.”—Be not jealous, Adelaide: you are aware that my fine eyes make much less impression on Melrode than Julius’s. I told them the good news, the happiness of your country, Adelaide, and the hope which is entertained in France of the return of a great number of prisoners who had been thought lost. Maria trembled at these words, and said nothing. She discontinued her supper, and, motionless and pale, scarcely seemed to breathe. Hermacantha, whom nothing escapes, immediately recovered her ordinary manner, asking me whether I had not met the Duke in Paris.—“Yes,” said I; “he is come to see us; and, on setting out, I met him near the barrier,

with—” “*With ?*” said Hermacintha, taking my arm, as if to prevent me from continuing.—“With La Corali,” said I : “why dissimulate ? As to the rest, he is very ill. I thought the Duke much changed : I hope he will see it himself.”—“Yes,” said Maria, “*much changed !*” We spoke of indifferent things. I assigned the pretext we had agreed upon for my journey, and which appeared to justify the emotion of Melrode. I delivered your letter only.

The next morning, at an early hour, I obtained a conversation with Hermacintha and Melrode. I struck the first blow, announcing the existence of Julius. Adelaide, dost thou remember the joy which I expressed when I received thy first born into my arms ? Dost thou remember thy own joy, when thou sawest me outside the prison at Strasburg ? This was what the cold Hermacintha experienced now. She fell on her knees, and, lifting her hands to

heaven, "O my God! I thank thee," said she, with an expression which I cannot convey. She wept much, desired to know every thing, and asked for the long letter which Julius had written to me, and which I had mentioned to Melrode. I refused to let her see it, and adhered absolutely to your orders, Adelaide. She submitted to them, and we agreed upon all we had to do; but she had reckoned too much upon her strength. A few hours after, I learned that she had taken to her bed.

For the first time, Hermacantha opened her bed-chamber to a man. She sent for me; she could neither conceal her trouble, nor recover her tranquillity. Maria was with Hermacantha. I was going to give them some letters, when Maria said to me, with a terrified air, "What do you bring us, Sir? Your arrival has turned all our heads! There must be something extraordinary: if it is so, fear nothing; tell me all."—"What is the

news which you would like best to receive," said Hermacintha? Maria hung her head upon her bosom: "Ah! do not flatter me with a foolish hope! I am too certain of his fate."—"Very well," said I; "but they assure us that among the prisoners who are arrived from Russia, there is a young man who perfectly resembles Julius." Maria burst into loud laughter, crying, "What a story!" She seemed beside herself, and Hermacintha, alarmed, made me a sign. "I, too," said I, "believe that it is a foolish story."—

Maria's laugh had struck us; it seemed rather a convulsion and expression of grief, than of pleasure. We talked of news from France and Holland. I told them that the pastor and magistrates of the village were repairing the château, and had nearly finished it. In the evening I entertained them with the history of Corinna and Ernest, both of whom are returned into the bosom of their

families, after having been long since wept for as dead. On leaving them, I begged pardon for having omitted to acquit myself entirely of your commissions ; I promised they should have them early the next morning, when I sent to inquire after their health. Maria wished to have them immediately ; but I declined her request.

The next day, I sent Hermacintha a little sketch, which I made in haste, of Julius's history ; not judging her to be yet sufficiently calm to trust her with more delicate circumstances. She desired to be left alone, and when I saw her again, I found her extremely low ; for she had suffered much. As to Maria, her first grief past, her eyes had resumed a serenity which I had not seen in them a long time, and of which I had even believed they had lost the susceptibility. Nevertheless, she was not yet acquainted with Julius's history, and would hear nothing further, from the moment she

knew positively that he was alive. "Where is he?" said she: "When shall I see him? When will he come?" She passed all the night with Hermacantha. The next morning, the ladies were very late, and etiquette was resumed. Maria talked of Julius at dinner and almost all the evening, with coolness, and as a friend, a relative whom she would be very glad to see. "He is Hermacantha's brother," said she: "what do I not owe him! We were brought up together."

On rising the next morning, I saw several carriages and horses in the courtyard, and I asked what was the occasion. I learned that the Duke had arrived unexpectedly from Paris. Maria did not appear embarrassed by his arrival. She treated him politely, and even with a sort of respect: only, when he caressed his child, which he now saw for the first time, with a cold and awkward air, she wiped away a tear which was ready to fall.

The object of the Duke's journey being to sell his estate and his wife's jewels, he is to return in a few days. What afflicts me is, that he has travelled in company with La Corali, who is at an inn in the town, in view of the public. He pays little attention to the child.

I continued to forward every thing with Hermacantha, who was already prepared to see the ghost. On my side, I did not neglect to send in search of him. In the neighbourhood of the ladies' habitation, there is a wild and solitary place, called the Pas du Roc. Julius, according to my direction, was to place himself there, and I soon learned that a stranger had actually reached it. I went there; but, at first, all my search was vain. The stranger was inaccessible, and neither the reports of his servants, nor the view of his luggage, gave me any reason to be sure that it was Julius. I was about leaving the place, when I perceived him at the bottom of a walk.

He refused to know me, and repelled my consolations and embraces. Far from yielding, I persisted, and had the happiness to reach the heart of Julius. But when I talked to him of Hermacantha, and especially of Maria, he shook: "Never, my friend, never! How could I bear their sight?" I made him promise to receive me daily, and I left him to believe that the ladies were at the Hermitage, far from where he was.

After this, I induced Hermacantha to walk with me, and Mademoiselle de Melrode, and visit this picturesque retreat. The first time, she was the dupe of my stratagem; but her emotion was visible. The next day, long before me, she was gone to the Pas du Roc. Her suspicion had arisen in the night. I arrived when the brother and sister, in the midst of the tenderest emotion, were lavishing marks of affection on each other. Julius wished to tell every thing to his

sister. “ I know every thing,” said she, imposing silence ; “ Why is it not the same with thee ?” It was resolved that Julius should take up his residence in the town, near the habitation of Maria, and this was done the same day. Hermacantha declared to Maria, that she must either give up nursing her child, or cease to inquire after Julius ; that in spite of time, she could not have forgotten her affection ; that she could not see him again without emotion, and, therefore, not without prejudice to the health of her child.

“ Not nurse my child !” said she ; “ I would rather die ! I could not see, without the bitterest grief, that he should owe to another what he ought to receive from me. Well ! let us talk no more of your brother. When he comes, I shall see him with pleasure, if my infant permits me.” What a word for Maria is that—*my infant* ! she pro-

nounces it as thou dost ; it fills up all her idea ; she cannot utter it but slowly, and her eyes express her pleasure.

In spite of the calm which Maria affects, the name alone of Julius causes her too deep an emotion, and we were far from advancing in our project of preparing her to see him. We learned suddenly, that the château was sold, and that we must leave it. The duke proposed to his wife to come, with Hermincintha, and live at his house in Paris. We were not ignorant, at least Hermincintha and I, that La Corali lived there in secret. We persuaded Maria to ask her husband's approbation of our preference of the Hermitage. He did not hesitate to consent. We depart tomorrow. I could not let the ladies travel alone. The duke accompanied them only for the first two or three days. I shall bring them a great part of the route, and afterwards shall be, where nothing

can separate me, at the feet of my sovereign queen, whose little hands I kiss respectfully, as well as the cheeks of little miss.

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same.

TO-DAY I went to Julius. “Are we to leave you alone here?” said I.—“No; I know where she is. I have seen her; I see her every day, in spite of thee, of Hermacantha, and herself. Arrange your plans as you please; but, if you would have them succeed, let me be in the secret.”—“Do you know Maria’s history?” “As well as you,” said he, showing me a long letter which Hermacantha had written the night following their meeting. “What shall we do?” “Repose yourself entirely on me, and go back to Adelaide.” “But how, Julius, can this be; since Maria does not know that you are so near her, and Hermacantha thinks that you can-

not meet without danger? How, then, can you accompany them?"—"I shall follow them," said he, "without their suspecting it. Melrode only shall know it; and I will tell my sister that I shall go to the Hermitage by another road. Who should stop me on the public way? I shall escort them without their knowledge." Adieu, my Adelaide; the moment of my return is come. I have sent Julius's letter to Hermacantha, and in a few instants she will have nothing further to learn concerning him.

END OF VOL. II.

not meet without danger? How, then, can you accompany them?—"I shall follow them," said he, "without their suspecting it. Melrose only shall know it; and I will tell my sister that I shall go to the Hermitage by another road. Who would stop me on the public way? I shall escort them without their knowledge." Adieu, my Adelaide; the moment of my return is come. I have sent Julia's letter to Herminie, and in a few instants she will have nothing further to learn concerning him.

END OF VOL. II.

NEW NOVELS, ROMANCES, &c.

Printed for H. COLBURN, 50, CONDUIT STREET.

1. O'DONNEL, a National Tale. By LADY MORGAN, late Miss Owenson, Author of the Wild Irish Girl, Novice of St. Dominick, &c. 2d Edit. 3 vols. 21s.

2. LOVE and SUICIDE, or the Real Correspondence between Orlis and Lorenzo. 8s. 6d.

3. AMABEL; or, Memoirs of a Woman of Fashion. By Mrs. HERVEY, Author of the Mourtray Family, &c. 4 vols. 28s.

4. The MOURTRAY FAMILY. By the same Author. 3rd Edit. 4 vols. 24s.

5. The WIFE and the LOVER. By MISS HOLCROFT. 3 vols. 18s.

6. MYSTERY and CONFIDENCE. A Tale. By the Author of the Blind Child, &c. 3 vols. 18s.

7. LORIMER. A Tale. By MISS AIKIN. 6s.

8. ZULMA. A Tale. By MADAME DE STAEL HOLSTEIN; to which is prefixed an Essay on Fictions. 2 vols. 10s. 6d. Ditto in French.

9. DELPHINE. By the same Author. 4 vols. 24s. Ditto in French.

10. MADEMOISELLE DE LA FAYETTE, or the Court of Louis XIII. Translated from the French of MADAME DE GENLIS. 2 vols. 12s. Ditto in French, 10s.

11. THE HEROINE, or, Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader. By EATON STANNARD BARRETT, Esq. 2d Edit. 3 vols. 18s.

“ L'Histoire d'une Femme est toujours un Roman.”

This Work has been pronounced by a well-known Critic to be superior in plot and interest to Don Quixote, and in point of wit and humour not inferior to Tristram Shandy.

12. TRAITS OF NATURE. By MISS BURNEY. 2d Edit. 4 vols. 28s.

13. GERALDINE FAUCONBERG. By the same Author. 2d Edit. 3 vols. 21s.

INTERESTING NEW WORKS.

14. MYSELF and MY FRIEND. By MISS PLUMPTRE. 4 vols. 28s.

15. The WILD IRISH BOY. By the Author of Fatal Revenge; or, the Family of Montorio. 2nd Edit. 3 vols. 18s.

16. The MILESIAN CHIEF. A Romance, By the same Author. 4 vols. 21s.

17. The OFFICER'S DAUGHTER; or, A Visit to Ireland. By the Daughter of a Captain in the Navy. 4 vols. 21s.

BIOGRAPHY.

1. MEMOIRS of GEO. FRED. COOKE, Esq. late of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. By W. DUNLAP, Esq. in 2 vols. 8vo. with a fine Portrait from an original Miniature, 21s. bds.

We have seldom been more amused and instructed than by the perusal of these volumes. The characteristic singularity of the adventures they record, the lively sketches of the individuals connected with the dramatic art, and the impressive lessons to be derived from the Journal of Cooke himself, all conspire to awaken the curiosity of the stranger, and to command the interest of the philosophic observer of life and manners.—*Theatrical Inquisitor*, October.

2. MEMOIRS of GOLDONI (the celebrated Italian Dramatist) written by himself. Translated from the original French. By JOHN BLACK. 2 vols. 8vo. 21s. Ditto in French.

The celebrated Gibbon has pronounced the Memoirs of Goldoni to be more truly dramatic than his comedies. Lord Byron has also pronounced the life of Goldoni to be one of the best specimens of auto-biography. It is replete with anecdotes of the most distinguished persons.

3. KLOPSTOCK and HIS FRIENDS. A series of Letters between the Years 1750 and 1800. Translated from the German, with a Biographical Introduction, by MISS BENDER, forming a Sequel to Miss Smith's Life of Klopstock. 1 vol. 8vo.



Louis Bonaparte

Maria; or, The Hollanders in three volumes

Bd.: 2

London 1815

Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek -- L.fr.o.15-b(2)
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11718417-5